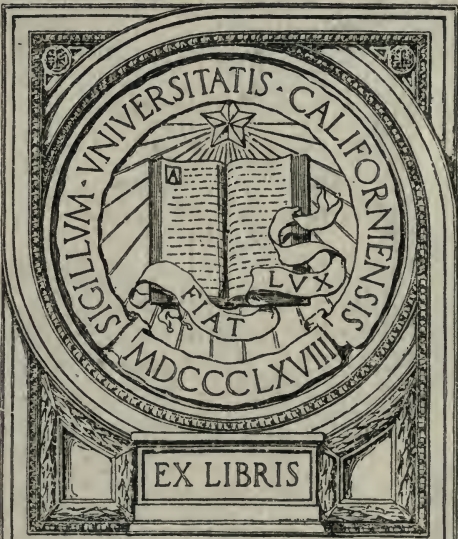


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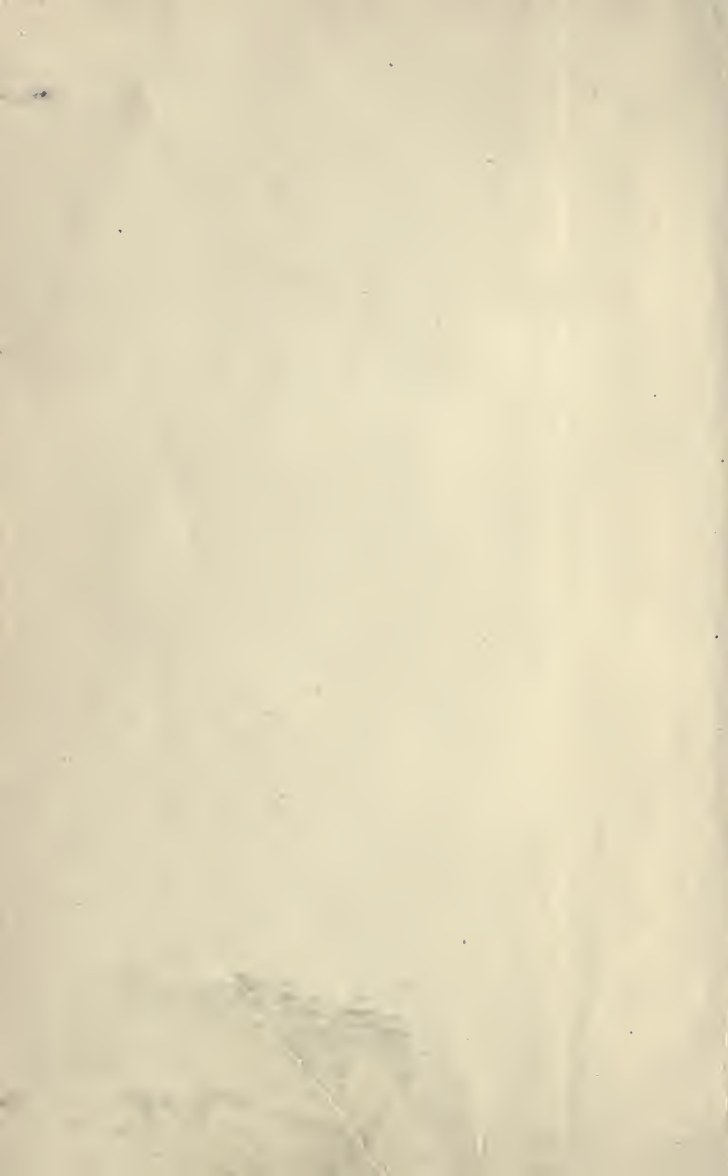
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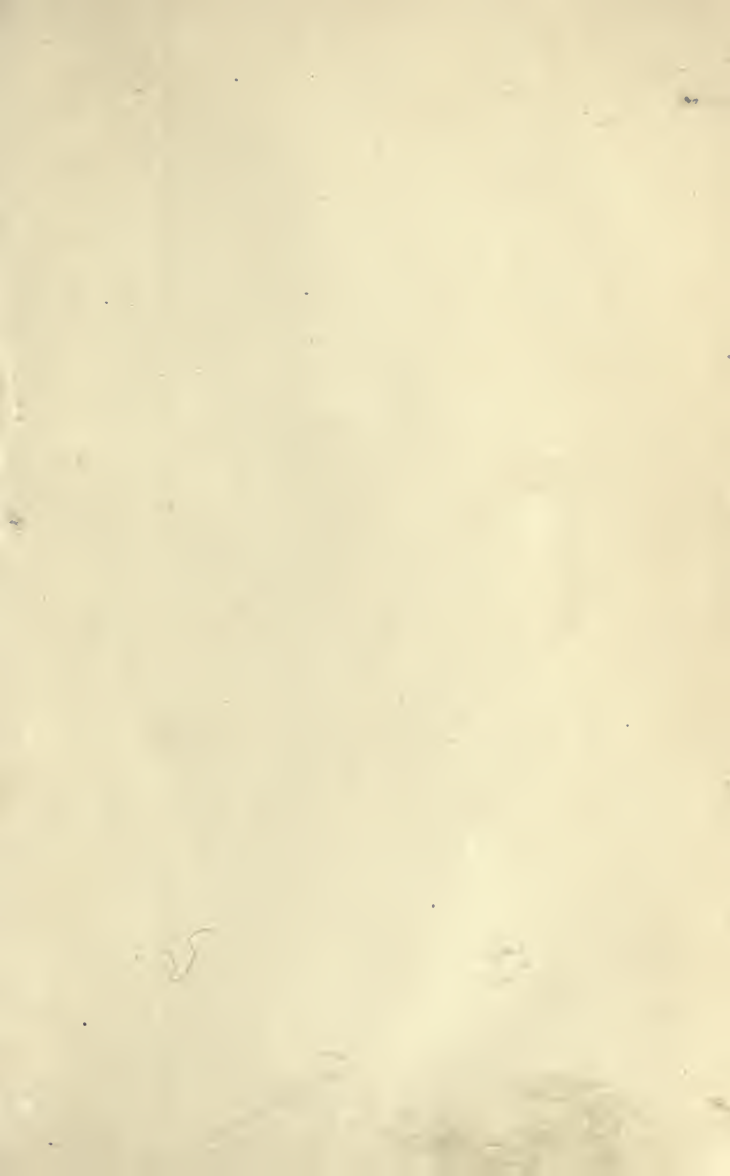


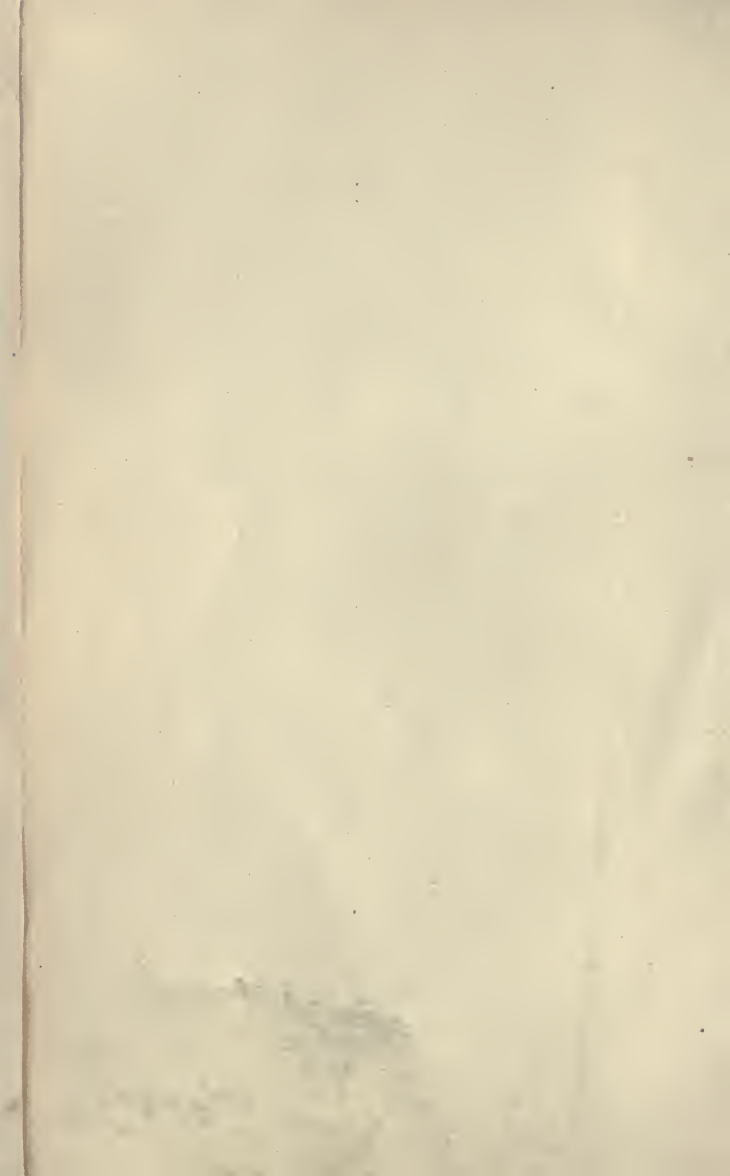
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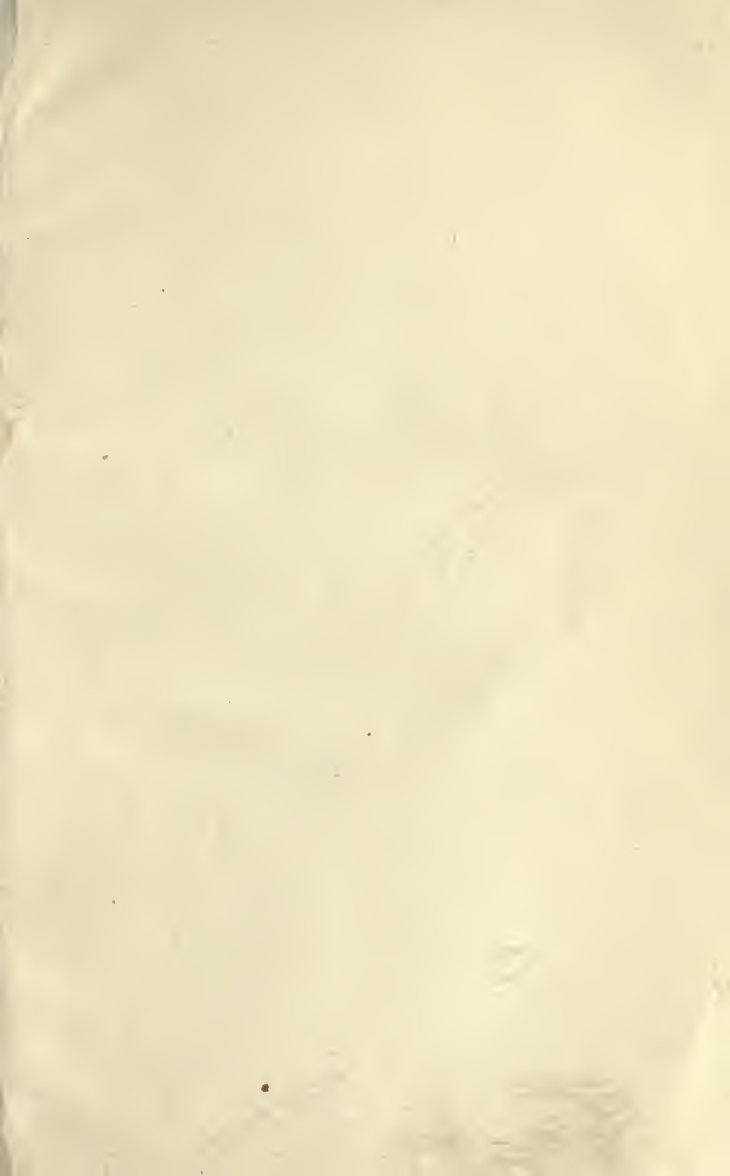












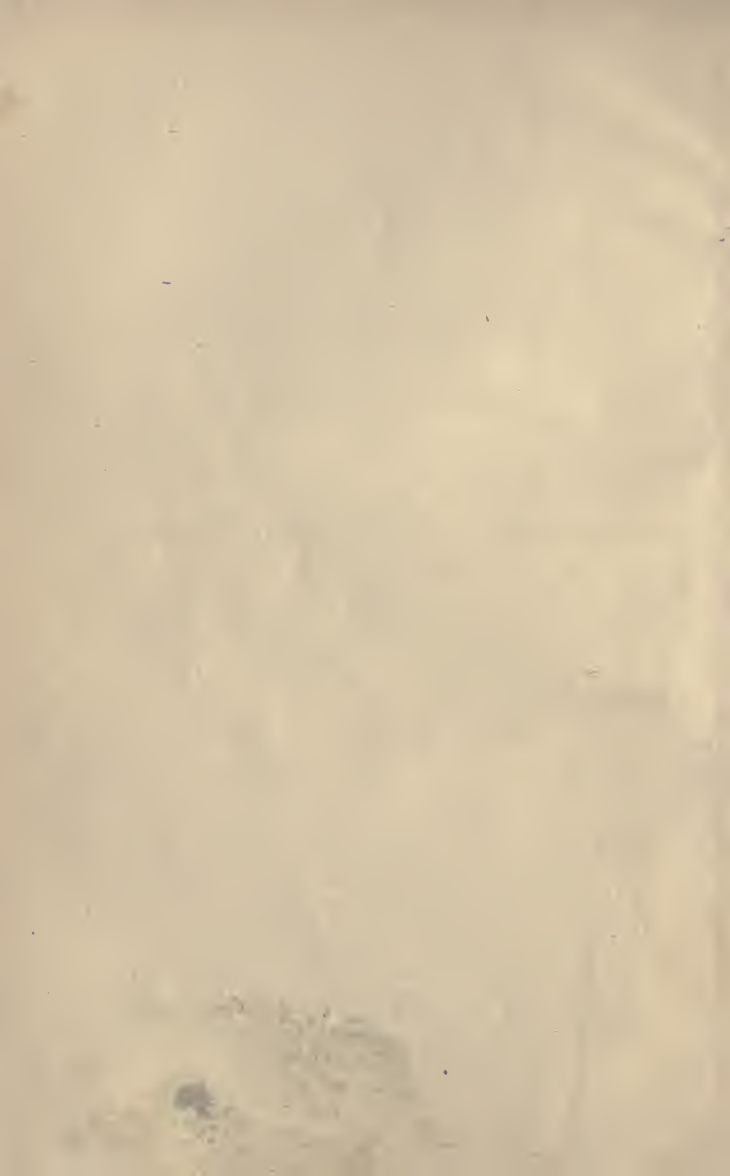















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# SPINOZA

A NOVEL

BY

BERTHOLD AUERBACH

*Author of "On the Heights," etc.*

FROM THE GERMAN BY

E. NICHOLSON

"All high things are as difficult  
of attainment, as rare."—SPINOZA



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# SPINOZA.

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## CHAPTER I.

ACOSTA.

ON a Friday afternoon at the end of April, 1647, in an obscure corner of the Jewish cemetery at Oudekerk, near Amsterdam, men were shovelling quickly to cover a sunken coffin with earth.

No mourners stood by. The people present stood in groups, and conversed on the events of the day or of the life and death of him now given to the earth, while the gravediggers hurried over their work in silence and indifference; for already the sun sinking in the west showed that it would soon be time "to greet the face of the Sabbath."

At the head of the grave stood a pale youth, who watched the brown clods fall into the hole with thoughtful looks. With his left hand he unconsciously plucked the buds from the well-cut beech hedge.

"Young friend," said a stranger to the youth in Spanish, "are you the only kinsman here of him

who rests beneath? I perceive that you knew him well, and could tell me who he is, that he should be shovelled over like one plague-stricken without a sigh or word of mourning or lamentation. I am a stranger—”

“I am no more related to him than you,” said the youth with some hesitation, “in so far as you, I presume, are of the race of Israel. You must indeed be a stranger, and come from distant lands, not to have heard of the fate of this unhappy, God-forsaken man. Oh! he was great and glorious, and how is he fallen into the depths!”

“Pray,” interrupted the stranger, “do not do as the others did whom I asked on turning in here from the street; tell me—”

“Do you know the family of Da Costa from Oporto?” asked the youth.

“Who has lived in Spain, and has not been impressed with the renown of that name? The most distinguished of knights bore it. Miguel da Costa, after whose death the family disappeared from Oporto, was one of the stateliest of the cavaliers, whom I saw at the tournament of Lisbon; he was once a zealous member of our secret community.”

“He, who there finds rest at last,” began the youth, “was his son, and, as my father often said, in figure and bearing the image of his sire. Gabriel, as he was named, was practised in all knightly exercises, deeply learned, especially in the law.

Though so early tortured by religious doubts, he accepted, in his twenty-fifth year, the office of treasurer to the cathedral charities. Then a desire awoke in him for the religion of his forefathers, and with his mother and brothers he left the land where rest the bones of so many slain for our faith, where Jews without number kneel, and kiss the pictures, which they—" Here the youth suddenly stopped, and listened to the conversation of the diggers at the grave.

"God forgive my sins," said one, "but I maintain this knave did not deserve to be buried on a Friday evening; because the Sabbath is coming in he is freed from the first torments of corruption. If his soul gets safe over, he will come to a spread table, and have no need to wander in Gehinom (Hell), for on the Sabbath all sinners rest from their torments. I told them they should have let him lie till Sunday morning: it was time enough for the fate that awaited him; and at least his death need not have led us to make a hole in the Sabbath. Make haste that we may finish."

"Ay, ay," responded the other, "he'll wonder when he gets over, and the destroying angel whips him with fiery rods; he'll believe then that there is another world that he did not see while living. Think you not so?"

"Pray tell me more," said the stranger.

"You have heard what they said," answered the

youth, "and the little man there with a hump on his back, who scoffs at him now, enjoyed much of his bounty; for his generosity was boundless. Gabriel came to Amsterdam, submitted to every precept, and entered our faith. Henceforth he bore the name of Uriel Acosta. He followed zealously what is written: 'Thou shalt search therein day and night.' I have often been told that it was affecting to see how the stately man was not ashamed to be instructed in Hebrew or the Holy Scriptures by the merest boy. But an unclean spirit entered into him, and he began to scoff at our pious Rabbis. You have heard here that he was one of those who deny the foundations of our faith; he has set down the sins of his heart in his writings, and would prove them from the Holy Word. Rabbi Solomon de Silva, our celebrated physician, has refuted his errors. Acosta was excommunicated, but freed himself by recantation. The contrary spirit in him, however, rested not. He not only opposed our holy religion, in that, as his own nephew said, he violated the Sabbath, and enjoying forbidden meats, and dissuaded two Christians, who would have changed to Judaism, but he spoke openly, as a very apostate, against all religion. For seven years he refused to live according to the precepts of our faith, or undergo the penance laid upon him. He should have been laid forever under the greater excommunication, and expelled from among our people. On

the persuasion of his former friend, the pious Rabbi Naphthali Pereira, he submitted to the sentence of the Beth-Din (the court of Rabbis), and bore all the hard penances to which they subjected him. My father often said, if Acosta had entered the field in defence of our religion he would have cheerfully and courageously gone to his death for it, but he could not live for it. Domestic disunion, the breaking off of his engagement to a daughter of Josua di Leon, disordered his mind entirely. He left as his last will the story of his life, wherein he sought to justify himself; if you remain in Amsterdam you may hear many other things about him. For a long time he had not spoken with any one, contrary to his former ways; men took it for repentance, but he brooded over new misdeeds. He shunned the Rabbi Naphthali Pereira, for he held him to be the first cause of his sorrows and misfortunes. Early yesterday, as the Rabbi passed Acosta's house on his return from the synagogue, the apostate shot at the holy man with a pistol. He was once a good shot, and renowned for it in his native town; but an angel from heaven must have held his arm, for it is wonderful that he did not wound the holy man! He seems to have premeditated the deed, for he immediately seized a second loaded pistol, and shot himself in the mouth, so that his brains are said to have been blown even to the roof. For this, therefore, is he now infamous—"



“Baruch,” interrupted a long lank youth who now approached them, “Baruch, come; all is finished, and we return home with our master.”

“I am coming, Chisdai,” answered Baruch; and bowing to the stranger he crossed to where those assembled prayed in the Aramaic language for the resurrection of the dead and the restoration of Jerusalem. On leaving the graveyard each one plucked grass three times from the ground, and throwing it over his head said the following verse in Hebrew: “And they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth” (Ps. lxxii. 11). Three times, in front of the graveyard, each one washed his hands in the water brought for the purpose, to cleanse himself from the touch of the demons who haunt God’s acre. While so doing they said the verse (Is. xxv. 8), “He will swallow up death in victory.” Only then could they proceed on their homeward way, but even on the road the verses of Ps. xc. 15 and Ps. xci. must be three times repeated. According to custom, they seated themselves while commencing the verses on a stone, or sod; the first verse being spoken they renewed their march. Thus departed Baruch and Chisdai, with their teacher Rabbi Saul Morteira between them.

“So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord!” (Judges v. 31) said Chisdai at last. “On this haughty man the judgment of the Lord has declared itself in all its might. Thou didst not see his pen-



ance, Baruch. I hope that mine eyes may never see such another. A sinful pity arose in me until I perceived with sorrow that men are constrained to wield the lash of God. All is fixed in my memory. I see the apostate before me as he read out his recantation in the synagogue, in a white winding-sheet, not in his former imperious tone; he carried his front less audaciously high: but what good was it that he, like the Prophet Isaiah, bowed his head like a reed to the wind? And when they led him to the corner, and bound his Samson-like arms to the pillar, and bared his broad back—I see it all before me as plainly as if it were before these eyes now. The Chacham stood near the sexton, and read out the verse (Ps. lxxviii. 38): “But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.” Three times he repeated the thirteen words, and at each word the sexton laid his lash on the bare back. Not the slightest sign of pain did he give, and when he had received the required number, he still lay there motionless, his mouth kissing the ground his feet had refused to tread. At last he was re clothed and led to the entrance of the synagogue: there in the doorway he was forced to kneel, the sexton holding his head, that each as he went out might set his foot on the scarred back, and step over him in his way; I made myself heavier as I stepped, that he

might feel my foot also. I tell thee it is a shame that thy father should have taken thee away with him just on that day. I saw him, when all the rest were gone, rise, and go back into the synagogue; he tore the holy chest furiously open, and gazed long on the scroll of laws, till the sexton reminded him to go. "Are the gates of heaven again opened to me?" he asked—and he seemed to me to laugh scornfully. He wrapped himself in his mantle and sneaked home. The ways of God are just! He has fallen into the pit which he digged for others. Thus must all such perish: he is lost both here and there." Chisdai glanced at his teacher to read in his looks the approval of his holy zeal; he, however, shook his head thoughtfully, and repeated the prayer before him quietly.

Baruch had twice opened his mouth to answer his schoolfellow, but fearing to express his pity for the sinner's fate too warmly, he had remained silent. Now when he perceived the displeasure of his teacher, he said, "Thou dost not appear to imitate the Rabbi Myer's wife," alluding to a narrative in the Talmud in which the woman changed the word *sinner* in Ps. civ. 35, "Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more," into *sins*, and continued, "for there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not" (Ec. vii. 20).

"I too abominate the teaching that led to the perplexities of Uriel—"

"Name him no more: he is damned," interrupted Chisdai; while Baruch continued:

"He has overthrown even his teachings, since it drove him to suicide. While he lived men judged him; now he is dead God alone can judge him."

The Rabbi nodded to Baruch without saying a word, being still busied with the Psalms.

"But it is written," said Chisdai defiantly (Prov. x. 7), "'The name of the wicked shall rot.'"

The three walked on for some minutes in silence, each engrossed by his own thoughts. At last the Rabbi broke the stillness, and explained that the revealed law admitted of no denial, for God had written it with His own hand, and delivered it to us all that we might live according to it.

"Whoever desires to live according to the suggestions of his reason, denies the necessity of revelation, denies its truth, and thereby mocks the laws that must rule him."

"There are men," concluded the Rabbi, "who say: 'Let each think and believe as he can answer it to himself.' They are themselves, without knowing it, fallen away. We dare not leave any one born in our faith to perdition, for it would be our perdition also. If we can bring him with discourse to repentance and penance, we sing 'Hallelujah!'"

but if he remain obdurate and stubborn, we rend our garments; he is dead; he must die, or kill the Satan in his heart. We constrain him with all the power that God has given us."

"They constrain him until he says 'I will,'" interrupted Chisdai from the Talmud; and the Rabbi continued:

"If we cannot exorcise the lying spirit in him, we exterminate him, and his devil also. When words no longer reach, the Lord has given us the stone wherewith to stone. Let not yourselves be led by those who are now soft-hearted over the fate of the apostate, and say, 'They should have saved him—not driven him so far.' It is well for him that he can sin no longer."

A singular train of thought must have risen in Baruch's mind, for he asked after a pause:

"Where in Holy Scripture is suicide forbidden?"

"What a question!" replied the Rabbi peevishly; and Chisdai added:

"It says in the sixth commandment, 'Thou shalt do no murder,' without comment, and that means neither another nor thyself."

"You start strange questions to-day," said the Rabbi disapprovingly to Baruch. He, however, could not explain what disturbed him. The stranger had aroused him from deep thought as he stood by the grave of the heretic, gazing into the pit while they lowered the body in; it seemed to him

as though his own body were sunk therein, and that his spirit wandered complainingly and questioningly through the world. Is it the fate of the wanderer that he should be pushed over a precipice? Who can compel another's mind, who compel his own, to keep to the path mapped out for him? How unalterable must have been the convictions of him who was there shovelled over, that for their sake he should have tried to give death to others, and have given death to himself! Who dare judge and condemn in such a case as this? The words of the stranger had broken in on these heavy thoughts; the words of the Rabbi on their return had awakened his opposition anew, and raised a forgotten memory in the mind of the youth. Years before, when he stood for the first time among the graves, this grief had disturbed the mind of the boy. His uncle, Immanuel, was then buried; long an invalid, he had been much with the children, and had made them his messengers to the outer world. When all the people had left the graveyard, some to school, others to the harbor or exchange, and others to workshops and counting-houses, the noise of the city still going on, as if nothing had happened, the boy's heart beat fast within him as the question arose in it:

"How can everything go on so uninterruptedly when our uncle is really no longer at home?"

For hours the child wept in the empty room of



the dead man, where the window stood wide open as it had never stood before; and he railed at the cruel people, who left the sick man lying outside, and acted as if they had known no uncle. His mother—for he dared not complain to his father so—sought to pacify him, and explain that his uncle was no longer alone and ill, but well and happy above with God and his forefathers and all good men. The boy could not understand, and cried:

“Ah! you have not seen them: they have put him in a deep pit, and thrown great sods on the box in which he was sleeping; he is surely awake and cannot get out.” His mother strove to explain that only the body was buried; the soul was with God. The boy was pacified, but for weeks he thought, in storm and rain, “How is it with our uncle in the earth?” . . .

Since then he had stood at the grave of his mother, and remembered her consoling words. But to-day, at the grave of Acosta, the recollection of his uncle's funeral awoke anew. The apostate who was here buried had never been free all his life long from this pain that made his heart beat so fast. How does it happen that children and heretics ask the same questions? Is it because the one knows naught of revelation, and the other rejects it wilfully, intending to answer the questions for himself? Who dare punish for such struggles?

“Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldst thou destroy thyself? (Ec. vii. 17,) said Baruch to himself, and was silent.

When they arrived at the Rabbi's house he reminded his scholars impressively that the morrow would be the 6th of Ijar. They separated, each to his own home, to change their garments and hasten to the synagogue.

The corn-seed falls on open ground, a sod crumbles and covers it, and no one considers how it sprouts and strikes root, thus hidden from human eyes. Well may the life of man be likened to such hidden growth: its laws are still less revealed; only the result can be modified, not the process; examination but reveals more and more interruptions in this growth.

Again, no fruit grows to perfection except thus: the seed-corn must renew the changes of its life; must bud and sprout, become stem, foliage, and tree, to give seven and a hundred fold of the fruit that nourishes life anew.

## CHAPTER II.

### A FRIDAY EVENING.

THAT evening, in the corner room of the high house with the large bow-windows and handsome stucco work that stood on the town wall near the synagogue, unusual illumination and splendor reigned. The silver chandelier in the centre of the room, whose rare arabesques were usually wrapped in gauze, shone brilliantly in reflection of the seven candles that blazed in a circle round it. There were many other beauties to illuminate: the cushions of the carved chairs were stripped of their ordinary gray covers, and revealed the magnificence of their silk and gold embroidered flowers and birds to the eyes of all beholders, so that hardly a glance could be spared for the gorgeous carpet beneath. The glittering goblets and glasses stood in regular order on the sideboard, and reflected the light in varied broken rays. From the stove, a light puff of sandalwood smoke arose, and pervaded the moderately spacious apartment, in whose midst under the chandelier stood a round table covered with pink-flowered damask, on which the silver pitchers and goblets seemed to give promise of a



small but jovial company. On the east wall hung a picture on gilt parchment, and above it in Hebrew characters was written, "From this side blows the breath of Life." A frame brown with age enclosed the picture, in whose faded outlines the walls of a city were still recognizable, and underneath, in Hebrew, the verse, "Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I, the Lord, build the ruined places, and plant that which was desolate: I, the Lord, have spoken it, and I will do it" (Ezek. xxxvi. 36). It was the ancient city of the Lord, Jerusalem; and many eyes, now darkened in the bosom of the earth, had rested, with tears of grief or longing looks of joy, on this gilded parchment. There was no other picture on the tapestry-decked walls. On the ottoman reclined a youthful maiden; her rounded cheek rested on her right hand, the fingers were lost to sight in the abundance of her unbound raven tresses as she thus rested; an open prayer-book lay before her, but her eyes wandered beyond it into vacancy.

Was it devotion, was it the thought of God, that filled her soul? Was it a beautiful memory that rose before her, or dream-pictures of the future that entranced her and brought that celestial longing to the rosy lips, and doubled the pulsations of her heart? Or was it that happy unconscious waking dream, that so often surprises the maiden developing into womanhood, and raises nameless and un-

defined longings in her breast? A Sabbath stillness rested on all her fairy-like surroundings. "I believe you are tired, Miriam, and no wonder!" said a nasal voice as the door opened.

Miriam sprang up hastily, pushed back her hair from her brow, kissed the prayer-book fervently, laid it on the window-seat, and quickly smoothed the ottoman.

"Why, what a fright you are in! Did you think a witch was coming? I may be ugly enough for one, it is true; I have not had time to change my dress; but that was a piece of work," said old Chaje; and indeed her whole appearance verified her description of herself. A coif smoked by the fire covered her gray hair, except where some locks escaped, and strayed like cobwebs over her wrinkled face; a black streak of soot on her left cheek, and half over her nose was remarked upon by Miriam, and Chaje tried to wipe it off before the mirror.

"You were quite right," she continued as she wiped her face with her kitchen apron. "You were quite right to lie down a little. Why should that thing stand there the whole year round and never be used? I wish I could lie down on my bed for awhile; I want nothing to eat to-night, I am so weary. Ay! When one has been eighteen years in one service, one feels the toil does not only wear one's clothes out. You would be tired enough if you had been ten times up and down, cleaning

everything yourself and getting a bed ready for the strange guest; it is no little to do, but it is all set to rights now: he will stare to see it. What a good thing it is you bought the fish! Wine, fish, and meat—that the poor man has among the poor every Sabbath. Without fish the Sabbath is not rightly kept: it says so in the Thora. You are such a good housewife, you ought to be married soon; you will ask me to the wedding? Only take care not to wed such a little Schlemiehl as your Rebecca has. Have you seen how Baruch looks again to-day? As if he had been ten years underground. I'm afraid—I'm afraid that much learning may—God forbid it!—injure his health. Day and night, nothing but learning, learning, learning; and how will it end? My brother Abraham had a son, who was as knowing as Ristotles; he studied so much, that at last he quite stupefied himself. But hark! I think the service in the synagogue is over. I must go; I wouldn't be seen by any decent Jew as I am now. They are coming up the steps." Therewith Chaje slipped through the door.

Miriam was glad to be free from the tiresome talker. Her father, the stranger, whom we saw in the graveyard in conversation with Baruch, and Baruch himself entered. Miriam approached her father, and bowed before him; he laid both hands on her head, and blessed her in a low voice, saying these words; "The Lord make thee like the mothers,

Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah;" and he also blessed Baruch, saying this verse in low tones: "The Lord make thee like Ephraim and Manasseh." He and Baruch then chanted a short canticle in honor of the troop of angels who enter the house of a Jew on each Sabbath. The father's voice took a melancholy tone, as he sang, with his son, in the usual manner, the praise of woman in Prov. xxxi. 10: "Who can find a virtuous woman?" The beauty, and even the management of the house, were the same as ever; the careful housewife had ensured its continuance; but she herself had been torn from him by death. Doubly painful was the thought of her loss amid Sabbath joys. The stranger noticed the picture on the wall.

"Do you recognize it yet, Rodrigo?" said the father when he had finished the whispered prayer. "It is an old heirloom, and hung once in our cellar synagogue at Guadalajara; I saved it with much danger."

While the two friends spoke of their old associations, Baruch and Miriam stood at the opposite end of the apartment.

"You have a dreadfully dismal face again to-day," said Miriam, smoothing her brother's hair from his brow as she spoke; "come to the mirror and see."

Baruch caught his sister's hand and held it fast; he said nothing, but listened to the conversation of the men,

“It was an instance of divine providence, for which I shall ever be thankful, that I recognized you directly you passed,” said his father to the stranger.

“So you know my son, Baruch, already; this is my youngest daughter. How old are you now, Miriam?”

“Only a year younger than Baruch,” answered the maiden, blushing.

“A foolish answer,” said her father: “she is fourteen, I believe. I have an elder daughter, already married.”

“Ah, my dears! I have two children also,” said the stranger. “My Isabella is about your age, Miriam; my son will soon be twenty now. I hope when my children come here you will take care of them, especially in things pertaining to religion, for in all such they are wholly inexperienced. But stay,” continued the stranger as he stood with folded arms before Baruch. “When I look at Baruch again, I cannot understand how it was I did not recognize him in the graveyard: his singularly dark complexion, his long, dark, almost black eyebrows, are just like yours in your younger days, when you meditated some daring adventure or other; and this frown on his uneven brow—that is just you; but the black wavy hair, and fine-cut mouth, with the soft dimple at the corner—ah, with what celestial sweetness Manuela smiled with



those lips! A certain bold oppositiveness, that speaks in the lines of his face, all give him a partially Moorish look that he has from his mother. Ah, if she still lived, what joy it would give her to see me here to-day!"

Baruch listened to this description of himself unwillingly, and half in fear. When he heard thus of his partially Moorish origin, he recollected that Chisdai had taunted him with it in school; he was indignant that his father had not imparted it to him before. The latter noticed the annoyance of his son, and said to the stranger,

"You cannot conceal, Rodrigo, that you are a pupil of Silva Velasquez, and helped him to point out the beauty and ugliness of others to the dames of Philip's court. Baruch, you must show this gentleman your drawings to-morrow. Do not look so timid; nothing has been done to you."

"No, no," said the stranger, as he patted the boy's cheek, "I hope we shall be good friends. Did you not know my cousin, the learned Jacob Casseres?"

"Not himself," said Baruch, "but I knew his book, 'The seven days of the week at the Creation.'"

They then sat down to table, blessed the bread and the wine, and inaugurated the Sabbath.

"It is strange," remarked the host, after grace was said; "on other days I can hardly finish the

last mouthful before I put my lighted cigar in my mouth, but on the Sabbath it is as if all our habits were changed; I do not desire to smoke, and it gives me no annoyance to practise the self-denial." The guest gave no response.

"Bless me," continued the host, "I notice now you still keep to our native custom of mixing wine with water. If you remain with us in the foggy north, where we force land from the sea, and guard it each hour; where half the year the earth is stiff, and the blue canopy of heaven hidden with clouds; where you breathe in mist and vapor, instead of clear air; here in our town, where no springs flow, and water for drinking must be brought from a distance; where men live as if imprisoned by the sea; where the climate itself compels men to be tranquil and composed, and the foresight and patience which have made the land, and still hold it, are the prime virtues of mankind: remain here, I say, and believe me, you will soon conform to our custom, and pour pure grape blood into your old veins to make yours circulate the faster. Ah, it is a glorious and precious country, our Spain! Our Eden inhabited by devils. Now when I must so soon lay my weary head in the bosom of the earth, I feel for the first time that it is not my native land that will receive me."

"You are unjust," replied the stranger. "You here sit at your table without fear: there your

friend and your own child might be forced to confess with a heavy heart that you secretly worshipped the God of Israel; and the glow of a funeral pile might warm your old veins instead of this costly wine. You may dream now of the pleasures of your native land, and forget the terrible death that stared us in the face! The glorious chestnut woods with their cool dark shade could not invite us to rest, or the rich forests to the chase; on the morrow those trees might be our fagots; on the morrow we might be the hunter's prey. In truth, when I hear you speak so, I could join with those zealots who ascribe our afflictions to excessive love of our native land, too great pride and gratification in the respect we had won there."

"Yes, yes, you are right," answered his host; "but let us not disturb the joy of our reunion with dismal reflections. Come, drink! But stay! Miriam, bring the Venetian goblets here; and let Elsje light you to the cellar, and bring the two flasks that De Castro sent me."

"Brilliant!" exclaimed the stranger as he raised the glass of newly poured out wine to his lips; "that is real Val de Peñas; where did it come from?"

"As I said, Ramiro de Castro sent it to me from Hamburg. The wine has improved with us, but now it grows more fiery; and we—!"

"Well, well, we have lived; be content. The wine awakes the long-extinguished fire in me. Dost



thou remember yet? Such wine we drank that evening in the Posada near the House of Donna Ines, who had already made thee wait two evenings in vain. You struck the table, and swore never to see her again; yet the next evening in the silent Arbor it was 'dear Alfonso' and 'dear Ines' again. Ha! ha! ha!"

The father warned his friend of the presence of the children; the stranger took little notice, however, and revelled in the wine of his native land.

"Do you remember that heavenly summer evening?" he continued, "when we sauntered on the Alameda in Guadalaxara? I see you now, when the bells tolled nine, and every one stood still as if by magic to pray a Pater Noster. I see you standing before me; how you crushed your hat in your hands! Your eyes flashed fire as though they would set the whole world in flames, Donna Ines not excepted. You were a dangerous cavalier."

"By G—," continued the stranger, after he had taken another pull at the wine. "The sweat still stands on my brow when I think how we stood once in Toledo before the church of 'Our Lady del Transito.' 'Do you see,' you said, gnashing your teeth, 'that splendid building was once the synagogue of our fathers. Samuel Levi, who built it, hangs rotting on the gallows, and now—' It was a real wonder that, in spite of thy audacity, we got away with whole heads."

Thus the two old friends renewed the memories of their youth. For an hour they lived a life of pleasure and youthful fire.

"I cannot understand," said Baruch once, "how a man could be happy for a moment in such a land, where he would perpetually see scorn, shame, and death before him."

"You are too young," said the stranger. "Believe me, if men watched your lightest breath, there are hours, yea days, when you can be happy, and forget everything. If men repulsé you with scorn, and push you and yours aside into the mud, there is a holy of holies, wherein no earthly power enters: it is your own consciousness, union with your own faithful circle; the heaven that there surrounds us no man can take from us; not even the ever present horror of death.

"All these afflictions have passed over us, and yet we were happy."

"But the incessant discord in the soul? Christian before the world, and Jew at heart?"

"That was our misfortune, that I witnessed in your uncle Geronimo."

"Why does he not leave his dreary hermitage, and come to us?" inquired Baruch.

"He has left his hermitage, and we shall go to him: he is dead. Boy, these sad experiences you should have lived through; it would do you good your whole life long."

Baruch had risen from his seat, and repeated the verse appointed to be said on hearing of a death:

“Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the World, and Righteous Judge!”

“Tell us of it, I pray you,” he added; and Miriam too approached the table, and joined in her brother’s request.

“It is the Sabbath, and I ought not to do it,” said the stranger; “but as you ask it, so let it be. It was his death that decided me to save myself and all dear to me from such a lie.”

## CHAPTER III.

### THE JEWISH DOMINICAN.

**R**ODRIGO CASSERES took another long draught from his tall goblet, and began his narration:

“About eight months ago I received a letter from Seville through Philip Capsoli; I was horrified when I read the address, ‘To Daniel Casseres in Guadalaxara.’ It could only be some thoughtless Jew who would address me by my Hebrew name. How I trembled at the contents! ‘Daniel, Man of Pleasure,’ it said, ‘the day of vengeance and death is at hand, and I must die among the Philistines. Would you ask how it feels to be roasted? Come to me; I am watched by the holy police. In the name of the High God, by the ashes of our murdered brothers and sisters, I conjure you come to thy dying Geronimo de Espinosa.’ There could be no doubt that Geronimo himself had written the letter; the fine straight line under the signature, a sign of the worship of the one true God, showed me that plainly, even if I had failed to recognize the trembling handwriting.

“When I told my children of my intention to

travel to Seville, I was weak enough to be deterred from its fulfilment by their prayers and tears. I had almost forgotten poor Geronimo, when a dreadful dream reminded me of him, and the next day I set out on my journey.

“I parted from my children with a beating heart, telling them I was going to my sister in Cordova. I travelled swiftly through Cordova, and passed my sister’s house unnoticed; I could neither stop nor rest; it was as if an unseen hand drew me irresistibly onward. I arrived at Seville. The clock struck the hour as I mounted the hill. ‘There you dwell, my brilliant Geronimo,’ I said to myself, ‘and turn your footsteps to the Chapel, with prayer on your lips and scorn in your heart. Is it not a tempting of Providence for you, at heart a Jew, to venture your person in the councils of the Inquisition, even to help your brethren?’ I entered the chapel, and knelt till the mass was ended. I then arose, and looked round among the stout or ascetic devotees again, but in none could I recognize Geronimo.

“I questioned a familiar; he said Geronimo had lain for weeks between life and death, and talked continually of Daniel in the lions’ den. He led me to his cell. The invalid slept, with averted face; nothing was to be seen but the tonsured crown. A crucifix hung over the bed, and a friar sat praying beside him; he signed to me to enter

softly. Only the slight breathing of the sick man and a light whisper of prayer spoke of life in this grave-like stillness.

“At last the sick man rose; I did not recognize him: he had deep-set eyes, hollow cheeks, blue lips, overhung by a long flowing white beard. Geronimo’s appearance could not be so altered. He recognized me, however, immediately; and softly, with hardly a movement of his lips, said, ‘Are you there, Daniel? It is well that you do not desert me; you need not be afraid; you too are in the lions’ den; but God will help you to get out, as he did the prophet in Babylon; only from me they have sucked the blood and the life: I cannot get out. In truth, you will not leave me?’

“I had feared that the momentary joy of reunion might have hastened his death. I could hardly understand him when he acted as if we had been long together, as if we had never been parted. He signed to the brother praying beside him, who took his book under his arm and went out. As he went he whispered in my ear that I could ring if I required aid.

“‘Has he gone?’ then said Geronimo. ‘Come quick: give me the pitch-smearred hoops you carry under your mantle; I will hide them in my bed. To-night when they all sleep we will burn the nest over their heads: that will be a joyful sacrifice; the angels in heaven will laugh to see it; I am bound,



I cannot get out. It must be kindled at all four sides at once; we must be quick, or the Guadalquivir itself will rise from its bed and extinguish the flames on the mount; they have it in pay. Help me! the water takes my life. Lord God! I have sinned, I have denied Thy holy name. Once Thou showedst Thyself in wonders; send down Thy lightnings, that they may destroy me—me also, me first. I have sinned, destroy me!’

“He spoke quickly, and beat his breast with his bony fists till it resounded; I could not restrain him. He sank back almost breathless; I feared that he would die then, and would have rung the bell, but he rose again, and said, weeping,

“‘Come, give me your hand; it is pure—pure from the blood of your brethren: it was at the suggestion of Satan that I, a worm, tried to gnaw through this giant tree. I do penance for my pride; I have denied my God. I die useless, as I have lived useless. Do you not see my father there? He comes to help us. Have you pitched rings enough, Father? Do you hear the prisoners beneath singing Hallelujah? Ah, it is a beautiful song: Hallelujah, Hallelu El! We free you; you dare die. Do not look so reproachful; I am not in fault!’

“He sank back again, and stared at me with unearthly glassy eyes. I prayed him, for God’s sake and our own, to be quiet; I told him how I

had come in obedience to his letter; he should be at peace, since he had saved many lives, and God would be merciful, and look only at the heart.

“Then, in perfect consciousness, he spoke to me of his approaching death, and how rejoiced he was at the thought thereof. A flood of tears relieved his mind of its heavy load: then suddenly all was fearful confusion again; he called for consecrated water to soften his pain on his heart, that burnt like hot iron. ‘Drink also,’ he said to me, ‘the holy father has blessed it. Bless me! Father, it is the Sabbath. Where is Mother? Still below in the cellar of the synagogue. Mother, rise; it is I, thy Moses.’

“So he talked, and I was dizzy to think of the abyss before which I stood.

“Evening came, and Geronimo thought men came to put him in a dark prison, and stretch him on the rack; groaning painfully, and with an almost dying voice, he cried continually, ‘I am no Jew, I do not know where there are hidden Jews. Daniel, do not forsake me; do not forsake me, Daniel!’ At last he slept again. It was night; the full moon shone through the window and shed its silver light over the sick man. I prepared for death, since every word of our conversation, if overheard, would have brought me to a martyr’s death; by good luck, however, almost the whole order was employed in a search for Lutherans in the town. I prayed to God to have pity on Geronimo, and send him death.



Children, it is terrible to pray for the death of a man, and that man the friend of your youth. But why should this soul undergo a longer martyrdom? It was, however, otherwise ordained; I must experience yet more terrible moments.

“I sat there, sunk in troubled thought, when a familiar entered, and ordered me to come to the Inquisitor. My heart beat loudly as I entered his presence; I threw myself on my knees, and asked his blessing. He gave it me, and said: ‘You are a friend of Geronimo. In that you are a good Christian’—and here he gave me a piercing look—‘take care that Geronimo is obstinate no longer, but takes the Sacrament once more before he dies; endeavor to do this, and let me know immediately; he must not die thus.’

“I returned to the sick man’s cell; he still slept; I bent softly over him; he awoke.

“‘Come,’ he said, rising hastily, ‘now is the time. Look! Gideon with his three hundred men come also; they carry the fire-filled pitchers into the camp of the Midianites. Hush! be still! do not blow the trumpets yet. Let us celebrate High Mass.’ He folded his hands, and crossed himself three times. I prayed, I implored him, I wept for fear, and conjured him to be quiet. I spoke to him of our childhood’s days, and how he himself now would murder me, if he did not take the Sacrament.

“‘Why do they not give it me?’ he said quietly.

‘I am a priest; come, wash my hands; I am unclean; then I will receive it.’

“I went to the Inquisitor and told him that Geronimo, though still confused, himself desired the Sacrament. The Inquisitor assembled the whole order, and as they carried the Elements along the long corridor, singing the Requiem in the echoing hall, Geronimo sang loudly with them, and even when it was ended he sang the *de profundis clamavi* in a piercing voice with folded hands; then he tore his hands asunder, covered his head with them, and sang the Hebrew words: ‘Holy! Holy! Holy! Adonaj Zebaoth! (Jehovah, Lord of Hosts!) *Ave Maria gratia plena,*’ he said in the same mechanical tone. The Inquisitor used the moment to pass the Host to him; he devoured it, as if famishing.

“‘The cup! the cup!’ he cried, ‘I am a priest.’ The Inquisitor handed him the cup, he clasped both hands round it, and began the Jewish Sabbath blessing over it; then raising himself in bed with all his strength, he stood in the full length of his trembling figure, and cried: “On, Gideon! shatter the pitchers! Fire! Fire!’ he put the cup to his lips, threw it at the wall, so that it shivered to atoms, sank down, and was—dead.”

The stranger covered his eyes with his hand, and stood up, when he had said these words. No one uttered a syllable, for who could enter into the unutterable emotions of this soul? Each one feared

by a sound or a sigh to disturb the deep emotion of the other. It was the silence of death. Outside something tapped as with ghostly fingers on the panes; all started; the stranger opened the window; nothing was to be seen. He sat down again at the table, and continued:

“I had sunk down almost unconscious at the bedside of Geronimo; the cup with the spilt wine lay near me on the floor. I did not venture to rise, for fear my first glance should read my fate.

“‘Rise,’ said a harsh voice near me. I rose; the Inquisitor stood before me, not another monk was present.

“‘What is your name?’ he asked me sternly. I was in painful uncertainty; should I give my real name, or not? but perhaps he had already seen it, and a lie would make my death doubly certain. I told the truth; he asked for a guarantee.

“‘No one knows me here,’ I answered, ‘but my brother-in-law, Don Juan Malveda in Cordova; he can bear me witness that the Casseres, in whose house at Segovia the first sitting of the Inquisition was held, was my ancestor.’ I yet wonder at the courage with which I spoke to the Inquisitor in this decisive moment. ‘Swear to me,’ he said after a long and painful pause. ‘No, swear not, but if you let one syllable of what you have seen here pass your lips, you and your two children die the death by fire. You are in my power; I hold

you in unseen bonds, from which you cannot run loose.'

"He then ordered a familiar to conduct me from the Castle.

"If we take the history of the prophet Jonah literally, his feelings must have been like mine when he was thrown out by the sea monster. I thought I continually heard the dreadful Requiem, though all around was as still as death. Everything looked so unearthly, so strange; every bush that trembled in the moonlight seemed to beckon to me to hasten on.

"I was hardly capable of thought, through weariness and fear; and nowhere in that wide country was there a soul in whom I could trust.

"I looked up at the myriad host of stars; their celestial light shone comfortingly on my heart. God, the God of Hosts, watched over me; my whole soul was a prayer; He answered it.

"I reached my inn, saddled my horse, and rode as on the wings of the wind.

"The moon disappeared behind clouds, and only the pale light of stars shone on my lonely path. The horse seemed as if he too were driven by an unseen lash; he rushed irresistibly over hill and dale, and snorted with fear. Perhaps, thought I, the soul of some grim enemy of the Jews, perhaps that of a dead Grand Inquisitor, has entered this animal, and is now condemned to bear me through

the night and save me from my enemies. Often, when he turned his head and looked at me with his fiery eyes, it seemed to say to me, 'Do I not suffer enough for my earlier life?'

"I feared even my own shadow that danced over rock and stone, and I drove the sharp spurs still harder into the ribs of my steed.

"You, who have grown up and lived in freedom, you cannot know what a confusion is life in such moments; the earth is no longer firm, the heavens disappear, and whatever has been heard of the fearful and supernatural awakes anew. Anything supernatural, if it appeared, would be regarded without astonishment, for everything has become supernatural, incomprehensible, our own life most of all. Wearied out, I arrived at my sister's in Cordova, and first imparted to her the terrible fear that hardly let me breathe freely.

"When I went to my horse next morning in his stall, he lay dead; his great eyes gazed at me as strangely as on the previous evening.

"With a fresh Andalusian horse of my brother-in-law's I set forward on my journey. I took leave of my sister, but durst not tell her that I saw her for the last time.

"When I arrived at home the old rest and tranquillity had disappeared from the house. In each friend who bade me heartily welcome, in each stranger whom I saw in the streets, I imagined a



messenger from the band of murderers who called themselves a tribunal. Each one, I thought, would throw back his mantle and disclose the blood-red **I** on his breast. The old freedom from care had disappeared; I knew only fear and mistrust. Waking and sleeping, the figure of Geronimo was before me; 'you too, you too,' it said to me, 'may die such a death; deserted by the faith that was a plaything of thy cowardice; tossed hopelessly betwixt truth and lies.' I sold all my goods, and not without great danger—for you know no one is allowed to leave Spain without special permission from the king—was with God's help free. I sent my children out of the country by different ways; they have remained in Leyden. If God preserves my life, I will bring them here next week. If I should relate all that I suffered till I arrived here, it would keep us till the morrow, and I should not have told a tenth part; but it is already late, and if it pleases God, we shall remain longer together."

"Yes, the lights are already burnt out, and to-morrow is the sixth Iyar; we must rise early, so we will, in God's name, retire." So spake the father, and they all parted.

Pleasant as a Jewish house is on Friday evening in the festive hour, as weird and strange is it at the time of separation. The seven lights burn alone in the empty sitting-room, and it is a strange sensation to imagine it as light after light burns out;

for the law forbids a light to be extinguished or lit on the Sabbath, or taken in the hand.

In the corner house on the wall, each one went to rest in darkness, and each one was followed by some figure of terror from the narrative of the stranger guest. Old Chaje had already been long asleep, and dreamt of Miriam's wedding, and what an important part she would play therein, when her companion in the apartment, Miriam, entered and awoke her with a cry and a shake. "What is the matter? what is it?" said Chaje, rubbing her eyes.

"You snored so, and talked in your sleep, that I was frightened," replied Miriam. It was, in truth, another fear that made her a disturber of sleep. In the thick darkness she expected the spirit of her uncle to glide before her each moment, and wished to banish the fear by conversation. Chaje related her dream, and what a pity it was that she had been awakened; her mouth watered yet for the good things that she had enjoyed at the wedding; she had been seated near the bridegroom, with her gold chain and her red silk dress on.

"You may laugh," said she, "for what one dreams on Friday night comes as certainly true as that it is now Sabbath all over the world."

Miriam was glad to find Chaje so talkative, her ghostly fears began to fade. "What did my bridegroom look like?" she asked, as she laid her head on the pillow. But that Chaje unluckily did not



know; what he wore, and what he said to her, she could tell to a hair. She talked long after Miriam was asleep. It could not be ghosts of which she was dreaming, for when she awoke in the morning she drew the coverlet over her, shut her eyes, and tried to dream again.

Baruch did not awake so pleasantly. He too went to his chamber with a beating heart. It was not the ghost of his uncle that appeared to him in the darkness, but yet he was present to his thoughts. A restless spirit filled him with horror, and oppressed his soul. With a loud voice, and out of the depth of his heart, Baruch said the evening prayer, and laid emphasis on the conjuration, which he thrice repeated. "In the name of Adonaj (Jehovah), the God of Israel, with Michael on the right, with Gabriel on the left, before me Uriel, behind me Raphael, and at my head Schechinath-El (the Holy Ghost)"—he hid his face in the pillow, closed his eyes, but it was long before sleep settled on them; he was too deeply agitated. He had slept but a few hours when his father woke him from a feverish dream, for it was time to go to the synagogue.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE SYNAGOGUE.

A LIGHT mist still hung over the streets of Amsterdam; the golden letters of the words **יעקב ביה** (the House of Jacob) over the door of the synagogue on the town wall shone but dimly, but already a great many men and women crowded through the seven columns that adorned the vestibule of the synagogue. Baruch, his father, and the stranger were there. On entering the inner door, each stepped before one of the two huge marble basins that stood beside each door-post, turned on the brass tap and washed his hands. Baruch observed the rule of the Talmud, to wash the right hand first. Then they descended the three steps. Every synagogue must be below ground, for it is written: "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord!" (Ps. cxxx. 1.) Each one of those present placed over his shoulders a large woollen cloth, with three blue stripes at the ends, and tassels hanging from the four corners; the most pious, Baruch among them, covered their hats with it. "How lovely are thy tents, O Jacob! thy dwellings, O Israel!" sang a well-trained choir of boys; and here these words did not sound ironical, for the

simply built interior of the building was beautifully ornamented. At the upper end, on the side towards the east, where once the holy temple of Jerusalem stood, towards which the Jew turns to pray, the tables on which were engraved the ten commandments were supported by two stone lions. They stood above the sacred ark, and around it, in a half circle, almond and lemon trees bloomed in ornamental pots. For yearly, since they had been driven out of their Spanish home, they sent to the Catholic Peninsula for trees planted in the earth from which they had sprung, wherewith to decorate the synagogue, that for some few hours they might dream themselves back into the well-known plains.

The long opening prayer, spoken aloud by the choir-leader, gave all leisure enough for observation; but when at last the "Statutes of Israel" (Deut. vi. 5) began, all joined in with a loud voice. It was by no means harmonious; the whole building echoed with the wild war-cry,—for what was it but a war-cry, with which they had conquered life and death a thousand times?—"Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God *is* one Lord!" The soul of each would enter by force the impenetrable first cause of the existence of God. Baruch, too, closed his eyelids fast, and clasped his hands, his nerves thrilling in ecstasy, his whole consciousness, with its longings towards that other world, drawn upward to the rays concentrated in that one point of light

where it found itself in God. With upturned glance, as in the writings of the wise of old, he saw all the dangers of the waters of death before his eyes, that he would so readily have gone through for his faith in the unity of his God. His whole soul, thus elevated, felt refreshed as with heavenly dew.

The first prayer was ended; the folding doors of the sacred ark were opened on a glistening array of rolls of the law bound in cloth of gold, and ornamented with gold plate and jewels, that drew all eyes to the holy place, where the three most prominent men of the congregation read alternately the names of the towns and lands in which faithful Jews had suffered a martyr's death; the most worthy of these martyrs were enumerated and read out at the conclusion of the death-roll of the preceding year. Rachel Spinoza was among the first of these; her name was said with a blessing, and the pious legacies mentioned, which she had left for prizes in the Talmud school, "Crown of the Law." Baruch looked sadly at his father; for with the sacred memory of his mother was mingled the enigmatical mention of her Moorish origin.

The sacred ark was again closed, and Rabbi Isaak Aboab advanced to the altar in the midst of the synagogue. He was a thin little man, marked with small-pox, with a high forehead and prominent gray eyes, and a red beard on cheek and chin.

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me” (Ps. xxiii. 3), he repeated in a harsh voice. The corresponding text was added from the Talmud; and further, this choice explanation of the expression “thy rod and thy staff,” that by “rod” the *written* and by “staff” the *spoken* law was understood. The preacher then descended to his audience: “The living buried in a dungeon bemoans his life; the unkempt hair of his head is his only pillow; whether it be day or night, whether spring blossoms, or the autumn winds pluck the yellow leaves from the trees, he knows not; dust and darkness surround him, but in his heart are light and joyous day, for God dwells therein. In his loneliness an innumerable host of angels hover round him, who bear him away out of the hard prison-walls, far away, over the world to the throne of God, where he rests in prayer.”

All the grades of torture the Rabbi described to his hearers, to the most extreme degree, when by dropping of water on the top of the spine the nerves of the brain itself are weakened.

“Woe!” he cried; “our eyes have seen the indescribable afflictions with which the Lord menaces us. No. Let us not cry Woe, but Praise and Thanks to Him who has lifted them all to a pasturage in the glorious light of His Majesty!” The

translator of Erira's "Doors of Heaven" here described the joys of everlasting felicity in all their exceeding glory, and praised that doctrine before which the angels bow themselves, and the Universe trembles; he described that absorption of self in the teachings of God and his creation, which, to him whose inmost heart is so absorbed, gives heavenly blessedness even here, and lends power to create and to destroy. With the usual conclusion, that God would soon send his Messiah, and restore Israel to his inheritance, he finished his discourse.

Rabbi Saul Morteira, whose tall, well-covered person we have already encountered on the previous day, advanced next to the altar. "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth" (Is. xxv. 8), he began in a low voice. "I look round on this assembly, and again a year has thinned its ranks; another year will come, and with it this day of mourning and of rejoicing; and many of us will then have vanished from our places; perhaps I also! 'I also, O Lord! here am I,' I answer, if thou callest to me." With these words the Rabbi beat his breast with both hands till his voice trembled. He spoke at greater length on the suddenness of death, and the grief of the survivors; half-stifled sobs were heard from the trellised gallery of the women, and here and there among the men; only



a few, who thought a funeral oration on the Sabbath unlawful, remained unmoved.

Baruch, too, stood with tears shining in his eyes—tears of longing; he felt God to be so near, so familiar, that he wished to die, and never more to be separated from him. “Check the sigh that would raise thy breast, for God the Lord wipes the tear from every eye,” cried the Rabbi. From the application of his text to the fate of the individual he turned to that of Israel.

“For the Lord will wipe the disgrace of his people from off the face of the earth; but only those who have guarded his word in their hearts dare demand the fulfilment of his promise.” The preacher added to these words an ingenious but plain and sharp argument against Christianity. With bitter zeal he railed against the subtilizing intellect of man, that aspired even to explain the immeasurable.

“In the Talmud tractate Chulin it is related that ‘the Emperor Hadrian desired once of Rabbi Jehosuah that he should show him the Uncreated One, or else he would esteem his learning and faith as naught. It was a hot summer-day; the Rabbi led the Emperor out into the open air. ‘Look at the sun,’ he said to the Prince. ‘I cannot,’ he replied; ‘it dazzles my eyes.’ ‘Son of Dust!’ said the Rabbi, ‘the rays of one single creation thou canst not endure; how couldst thou see the Creator?’”



So spake the preacher, and concluded his parables from the Talmud with the one (well known to readers of the New Testament, here slightly altered) on the laborers in the vineyard, and the one of those prudent and foolish ones who awaited the coming of the Saviour. He mingled amusing anecdotes with his sermon, raising thereby an involuntary laugh among his audience. The church and its servants did not then stand in their present frosty and oracular relation to the lay members. The Jewish Church especially, which both could and must offer all things to all men, did not refrain from godly jokes. An amused expression of interest spread over the faces of all when the Rabbi concluded; here and there men turned to their neighbors, and gave vent to their approval by gestures or exclamations. There are some Jews not sufficiently objective to abstract their attention from self enough to measure everything, even the words of their teacher, by the measure of the revealed law or their own reason. To these, therefore, it was no pleasure to hear yet another discourse; for now a man of compact figure and polished worldly address had taken the deserted place of Rabbi Saul Morteira.

It was that man of incomparable precocity and universality of genius, who, already a Rabbi in his eighteenth year, afterwards physician and statesman, had entered into controversy with Hugo

Grotius on the beauties of the Idyllic poetry of Theocritus, and with Rabbi Isaak Aboab on the mixture of metals in the image of Nebuchadnezzar. It was Rabbi Manasseh ben Israel, whose wife, a grand-daughter of the renowned Don Isaak Abrahamel, derived her lineage in direct line from David, King of Israel.

For some seconds Rabbi Manasseh covered his eyes with his left hand, then began with a powerful voice that reached all corners of the synagogue:

“‘O house of Jacob! come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.’ The day is again returned on which we consecrated this house that we built unto the Lord, for He allowed us here to find a refuge from the hands of our persecutors; but not by the strength of our hands have we obtained it. If God build not the house, vain is the toil of the laborer. We have built a house here unto the Lord; oh that the walls would expand and rise, as far as the heavens are stretched above the earth; and that my voice would fill the whole world, that I might awake the echoes with thunders, and lay in their mouths these words, that one echo might call them unto another. ‘O house of Jacob! come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord’ (Is. ii. 5). I myself, you all know, I had an enlightened father; he suffered martyrdom, and saved naught but bare life from the hands of those who call themselves Christians: but let us not look back

into the dim dungeon, but gaze on the light that streams on us from all quarters."

The author of the book on the "Salvation of Israel" continued in spirited language, though often in ambiguous and superfine phraseology, his address on the necessity that the Jews should join in the universal striving towards the higher development of the age. By the "Light of the Lord" he understood the classics not less than the teachings of Moses. (He railed against the Polish Jews, whose obscure customs and debased position he ascribed principally to their want of solid learning; at last he rejoiced his hearers with an "Amen.")

A roll of the law was then taken from the ark amid songs of praise. When it was handed to Baruch, he took the edge of the cloth of gold in which it was wrapped, and pressed it fervently to his lips.

The Thora was unrolled on the altar, and at each extract that was read out one of the three preachers was called upon to say the blessing thereon.

At the fourth extract the reader raised his voice and cried: "Rise, our teacher and master, Rabbi Baruch Ben Benjamin!" Baruch Spinoza, who was called to the Thora by this title of honor, was fiery red; he left his seat and repaired to the altar, where he read the blessing in a trembling voice. Every one in the synagogue wondered at so un-

precedented a case as for a youth of fifteen to attain to such an honor; a few only there were who thought it misplaced, for Baruch was beloved of all who knew him. With the long, so-called *Mussaph* (additional prayer) and some concluding prayers the service was ended.



## CHAPTER V.

### FATHER AND SON.

AT the door the throng was great. Every one congratulated Baruch and his father on the honor that had befallen them.

"Certainly," said the father to his son on their homeward way, "the discourses have lasted over long to-day; the preachers should consider that they preach to empty stomachs (for no one must taste food before morning service). Let it be a warning to you never to preach too long. Are you pleased?"

"I am confused," answered Baruch, "with my rise to such a height; I am too weak."

"God keep you in that mind," said his father approvingly. "Well-balanced natures are easily abashed at the honors assigned to them. Trust in God who has chosen you out; he will give you strength to fulfil your vocation; only say to yourself you are chosen for it, *because* you have the strength to fulfil it."

On the threshold of their home, the father, as on the previous evening, laid his hands on his son's

head, and blessed him thus: "The Lord make thee like unto Ephraim and Manasseh."

Miriam stood on the step, and gave Baruch a parchment that Rabbi Saul Morteira had sent. It was his diploma as Rabbi.

The father then opened his plate chest, and chose out his heaviest gilt goblet, to send it to the teacher some other day.

Baruch from that time was qualified to prefix the title of Rabbi to his name.

He felt a strange shock whenever visitors addressed him by the title: it seemed to him as if he wore an unseen crown on his head. Soon, however, this exaltation of mind was disturbed by inner confusion, that henceforth augmented with ever increasing force.

Baruch now belonged to the qualified guardians of the law; and it was not mere modesty when he protested to his congratulators that he felt too weak for the burden imposed on him. Was it the shiver of weakness that overtakes those who have attained the goal long earnestly striven for?

What jealous demons would raise such inward doubts? Formerly they made themselves known but fleetingly, and were easily conquered; but now new ones too, unthought of before, forced themselves into notice, and mocked his honors.

Baruch seemed often lost in them. The ghost of Geronimo, the man with the double life, that had



not appeared to him in the night, appeared to him now in full daylight, seizing on him at every corner.

At table, where every one drank Baruch's health and every one thought of him, he regained his spirits and joined in the festivity.

In the afternoon, as he read the extracts for the day of the week, and the commentary on them, he was again aware that only lips and eyes were reading; his mind was not there. He spurned the contrary spirit in him, and fervently prayed to God to stand by him, and help and strengthen his faith. Tears fell on the open book; they softened the anguish of his heart. In a clear, firm voice, as if he would proclaim them to a congregation, he read out the words of the law, and by this invocation banished the demons from his heart, and a happy animation pervaded his being.

His father came, and sat quietly beside him awhile; then said, closing the book:

"Baruch may now be less diligent, he has attained to the highest honor in his youth; he must now take pains to strengthen his body."

Baruch kissed the book again, and placed it on the shelf, then warmly clasped his father's hand.

"O my son!" began his father again, "your honor is sevenfold my own; you cannot realize it. May you one day experience the like! Naught is like unto the blessedness of the father who him-



self strives after an honor, and then sees his son attain to it; my happiness and joy rest on your head, are yours, and yet more than mine, better than mine. I see the time of the Messiah before me; I know now how it must be to the Father's heart to call his Son the Saviour. God pardon me, my heart is so overfull! I should not say so to you, but you may thus know how blessed you make me. My last brother is dead; that wound is healed with heavenly balm: you are my son, and brother also."

Baruch had never seen his father so agitated; with humble looks he gazed at his flashing eyes. The souls of father and son found peace in communion. The father covered his brow with one hand, and after a pause said in a quiet tone:

"Have you no wish, Baruch? Speak out; I would willingly reward you for the joy with which you have animated my heart."

It was a singular return to the common world, and only because the desire was habitual to him Baruch said:

"Let me at last learn the language of all secular learning—Latin. Why should I know less than my schoolfellows Isaak Pinhero, Ahron de Silva, and many others?"

"Yes, I will grant your request. God, the All-good, who has led you hitherto, will guard you further, that you may drink in no poison from

such writings. And now, have you no other wish?"

"Is it true," said Baruch, looking at the ground and blushing, "is it true what Rodrigo Casseres said yesterday evening about the Moorish origin of my mother?—blessed be her memory! Did I wrong Chisdai Astruk when I struck him in the face a year ago because he mocked me with it?"

The father's face changed suddenly at these words, he gazed before him, and pressed his lips together: at last he took a key from his pocket, opened a chest, and took out the death-gear that every pious Jew keeps ready, unrolled them, until he found a paper; this he handed to Baruch with these words:

"Take and read it; you have heard of the death of my brother; you are the heir of all our traditions. Remember that. These words should have been yours when my mouth was mute, but it is better so. You are strong enough."

The father pushed the writing towards him with a trembling hand, and left the room to go with his guest to the harbor, the so-called *Buitenkant*, where the monotonous cry of the sailors echoed across the water, and his co-religionists passing in the enjoyment of the Sabbath repeatedly congratulated the happy father. He showed his guest the verdure of the reclaimed marshes; and to-day a certain pride in his new home, and in its position gained by unremitting energy, arose in him.

As he showed his friend the water-working wind-mills, and explained the plan of the dykes and dams, and how each piece of fruitful land had its history, his hearer looked on in astonished sympathy.

This man, who now first saw himself openly joining in the faith of his fathers, must have followed a devotional train of thought, for he said:

“In these Netherlands our God seems a second time to have miraculously dried up the sea, for the salvation of his people Israel. He has not done it by supernatural means, but taught his power to men.”

Meanwhile Baruch sat in his chamber and read:

## MANUELA.

FOR MY ONLY SON, BARUCH, ALONE.

WHEN these words come into your hands, my mouth will be mute, my soul again with her to whom it ever belonged, and of whom I am now about to tell you. . . .

My whole youth rises before me, my cheeks burn; from scorn and lies I have won a blessed life.

Give heed.

I was twenty years old the spring when I travelled to Seville to visit my brother Moses, called Geronimo, in his monastery. I say I was twenty years of age; but I knew men, and their dishonest ways. Misfortune and deceit age men before their time and teach them experience. I arrived in Seville. My brother received me with cruel coldness, hardly giving me his hand through the bars of the grating in the monastery parlor. "Son of earth, I have naught in common with thee; what wouldst thou with me?" he exclaimed.

Such a reception did not attract me to him. I had business for some weeks in the town and neighborhood. I remained, therefore, a week in Seville, without seeing my brother again.

In the gay companionship of Lindos and Majos I

passed many careless hours of pleasure, but the thought of the fate of the flower of our faith in Seville was too grimly earnest to be forgotten. I visited the graveyard before the Minjoar gate, destroyed five-and-twenty years ago: there the bones of the great men of Israel once rested; there once stood the noble monument of our ancestor, of the great Rabbi Baruch de Espinosa, whose name you bear; but nothing was to be seen, not a single inscription marked the spot wherein the bones of the noble man had been laid; even in the grave Spain had denied them rest, and searched it for gold, silver, and unholy books.

One day an irrepressible inclination (after what resulted, I must needs call it an inspiration) made me revisit my unnatural priestly brother.

As if I were mounting the holy hill of Zion, where once was enthroned the glory of God, I made my way with equal joy towards the Castle of Triana, where priests reigned in the name of the Creator. I could neither account for my joy nor control it.

As I entered the parlor I was met by a sobbing maiden, who left the room with veiled face.

“Señora,” said I, “do you need a protector, and dare I—” I could not finish the sentence; the maiden raised her brilliant black eyes, a tear dropped from the long lashes, she shook her head slightly in denial, and went out.

I was led to my brother’s cell by a familiar. He

convulsively clasped my hand, and when the familiar left the cell, fell on my neck weeping.

“ Benjamin, my brother, it is thou, indeed; but I am no Joseph: I have sold myself. But no! no! I will be quiet. See! it is just as if we were at home—thou art the younger, and yet thou hast power over me. ‘Oh how lovely is it when brethren are together!’ ” he said.

He saw how the marked contrast between this reception and the last surprised me, and prayed me to pardon him; he could not act otherwise, because the parlor was so built, that the slightest whisper could be heard by the prior, whose cell was above.

They always half mistrusted him, and he wished to show that he, if need be, could forcibly tear asunder all the bonds of nature, and look upon the priests alone as his brethren, the Church as his true mother. He described his daily life to me, and how he secretly prayed to the God of his fathers; the most cunning intrigues, the most ghastly tales of murder, he related with unmoved and pious mien; only sometimes a faint smile hovered round the corners of his mouth. I expressed my wonder at this blank want of expression.

“An expressive countenance,” he said, “is our greatest enemy. Therefore with God’s help I have made mine blank and dull. Within all may be rage and rebellion if you will, but on the surface



must be peace—the blessed eternal peace of the Holy One.”

We talked long together. I reminded him of Eleazar, called Constantine Montefiore, who with the same view as Moses had become a Dominican.

“That is a case in point,” said Geronimo; “he was caught in the invisible snares that surround the parlor. His father visited him, they were careless enough to trust their secrets to the gossiping walls: an hour later they were thrown in prison. Constantine (I will not blame him: he is dead) could not bear the thought that he was guilty of his father’s tortures and death; with a piece of broken glass he opened a vein, and bled his young life away. Old Montefiore, already half a corpse, two days afterwards was burnt at an *auto da fé*, with the body of his son.” Thus talked Geronimo. I conjured him, by everything sacred, according to our father’s wishes, to take to flight; he swore hotly by all that is holy never to leave his cloister alive.

I returned to the town; the inexplicable obstinacy of my brother, with his life lost to the outer world, made my whole being shudder; but all my thoughts vanished like empty shadows when I saw the maiden, who had met me on entering the parlor, now sitting on a stone by the roadside. She did not notice me, and I passed her; hardly was I three paces distant, however, when I was moved to return as if by enchantment.



“Señora,” I said, “I have no right to penetrate the secrets of your heart; but I have a right, if you are in need of help, to offer it you, and you to demand it from me.”

She told me afterwards that the earnest tone of my voice had given her more confidence in me than my chivalrous words could have done.

“Leave me alone, kind Caballero; my knight must be death alone,” said she, in a voice in which tones of sorrowful refusal and timorous appeal combined in exquisite harmony. Oh, what an indescribable charm was in her whole appearance! I felt it, though in the twilight, and hidden by the carefully adjusted folds of her mantilla, I had seen little of her except her brilliant eyes.

An inexplicable thrill passed through me as I stood before her; I remained fast bound to her vicinity. It was more than mere pity, more than sympathy with unknown grief, that held me there; I did not know it was love, which reveals itself when we approach the being whom the Lord has created for us.

I talked longer with the maiden, or Manuela, as she was called. She excused herself for refusing my aid; I must not think ill of her; misfortune and grief had taught her mistrust of men. Tears choked her voice.

So grief was the companion of her youth also. Ah! the unhappy understand one another easily.

She told me that her father had already been imprisoned in the castle three months. She wished to wait here till the Inquisitor should return from the town; she knew well enough that her own life was in danger, because the law forbade any one, even though a child, to beg for the pardon of one accused of heresy; she would die with her father, and yet she feared the approaching night.

“I see already,” she said, “it must be so; and I must evermore await the morrow in weeping and wailing.”

She rose, and went quickly away. I stood as one rooted to the spot, and when she disappeared from my eyes at a turn of the road, a longing like homesickness overcame me, and I rushed after her. From the brow of the hill overlooking the magnificent bridge over the Guadalquivir I saw three veiled figures in white cloaks approaching with measured tread. Manuela threw herself at the feet of the foremost one; a piercing cry of grief reached me, and Manuela was forced aside. I sprang forward; the men quietly pursued their way, and advanced towards me; I checked my rapid course, removed my hat and bowed; it was the Inquisitor accompanied by two Dominicans, who were returning to the Castle of Triana from a hunt for souls.

The minutes I spent in humble trembling guise—a thousand curses for this villain, and a thousand cares for Manuela in my heart—were a foretaste of

hell. Like an arrow shot swiftly from a bow, I sped on to support Manuela, whose trembling steps approached the gates. She recognized me, and stood still. I could not speak for gasping, and only grasped her hand.

"Leave me, I pray you," she said, but without withdrawing her hand. I swore to her—oh, then I felt how dreadful it was not to dare name the Holiest by which a man can swear! I thought my tongue would become incapable, when I, at the moment when I would have given the greatest assurance, was obliged to swear by St. Jago. I could not speak, my whole soul was so agitated. Manuela clasped my hand in both hers, her tearful eyes met mine confidently.

"Yes," she said, "I will follow my impulse; unhappier than I am I cannot be; come with me, you shall hear all."

I offered her my arm, and with some hesitation she laid her trembling hand on it.

"These streets have never seen me thus," she said in a low voice as we turned into a side street from the gate.

I tried to soothe her; she was silent, and folded her mantilla closer. Without a word we went on, till in a narrow street, not far from the church of Our Lady of the Pillar, we entered an insignificant little house.

"Have you come at last, Manuela?" cried a loud

treble voice; and a round figure, with a light, rolled like a woolsack down the steps.

"I have already prayed thirteen Ave Marias, and vowed a three-pound wax-candle to St. Jago, if you should come home safe. Ah! my sweet little dove, whom have you there? Praised be the Virgin, is not that Don Alfonso Sajavedra from Valencia? Excuse me, sir, my old eyes—"

"You have indeed seen wrong, Laura; it is not my cousin, but a stranger—a friend, I should have said, who will help us."

"Then I was right," continued the old woman; "have I not often told you that if you went some one would help us? Whenever I went I was thrown aside like a squeezed orange: but laugh away," she croaked on; "it is just as the proverb says, 'A fresh stamped *real*, with the king's image—God save him!—is better than one defaced with use.' You may pride yourself, noble knight, that my trembling dove has made an exception in your favor."

The old woman was never tired of praising Manuela, and said it could only be by a miracle that I had gained so much from her. Manuela silenced her with difficulty. After the old woman had reviewed me to her satisfaction, she went out. Manuela must have met my gaze, for she dropped her eyes.

"Señor," said she, and hastily grasped my hand, "Señor, what are you thinking of me?"

“That we love each other,” I answered, kissing her hand.

“Yes, we love each other,” said she. “God in heaven knows it, we love each other. O mother, mother, why must you die before seeing the infinite happiness of your child!”

The tears coursed down her glowing cheeks at these words.

“Dare I love you, Señor?” she whispered, and covered her eyes and cheeks with both hands; “do you know me? do I know you?”

“We knew each other,” I answered, “the moment God kindled the spark of love in us; we love each other: is there a more intimate knowledge?”

Ah! it is but a feeble echo of that feeling that I can reawaken from the past; but even now, when I approach the grave, even now it thrills me like lightning, when I think how once almighty love exalted me. It was God’s providence, this self-knowledge and comprehension without effort or search. Then, I confess, I felt nothing of this; sunk in unanticipated felicity I did not recognize the unseen hand which guided me as clearly as now it is evident to me it did.

In the midst of her joy, the memory of the joyless hours spent by her imprisoned father recurred to Manuela. I consoled her, promised my brother’s aid; but she trusted little to that.

The old woman came in with the supper,



“What is the noble Caballero’s name?” she whispered to Manuela; I saw the maiden’s confusion.

“Tell my name aloud, Señora,” I broke in; “it sounds well in this land, and this good mother has guessed the half prophetically. I am Alfonso de Espinosa.”

We sat down in comfort; the old woman watched me continually, and bade Manuela notice whether she were right or not in saying my hair was like this or that friend’s.

“By G—’s blood!” said she, “how glad I am that there is again a sombrero on the nail! Two woman-kind alone are but desolate creatures, and who knows how things may go with old Valor?”

This name startled me; I pressed my Manuela to tell me her father’s history; she looked down, and began after a short pause.

“You know there were many Moorish ladies from Grenada in Cardia when the edict was read, that in future none would be permitted to go out veiled in the national manner. Among the ladies whose veils were torn off by the soldiery in the market-place of Cardia was my uncle’s wife, called the beautiful Mirzah. Her beauty was so great that you would have thought an angel from Paradise had been sent to bless the boldest of the followers of the former lords of Spain. No strange man’s eye had ever rested on this loveliness, and



now to be the prize of the rude mob! The news of this dreadful occurrence spread quickly amid the lamentations of the ladies; it was as if a violent earthquake had shaken the whole of Aljaniz, for the intention to abolish the remaining customs of the converted Moors was unmistakable. I do not know why I relate the story; I never knew Mirzah, who was cruelly repudiated by her husband, and her fate was wholly unconnected with ours. Excuse me if I do not know where to begin: I have not thought connectedly of these things, because I never expected to be allowed to give an account of them. My father, like the other Moorish Christians, then lived in Aljaniz of Grenada. Ah! I cannot tell it you to-day!" Manuela stopped and rose hastily from her chair.

"Well, well, I am here," said the Duenna; "don't I know it all as well as you? Was I not there when your mother—God rest her soul!—told it to you? I tremble to my heart's core when I think what life must have been like then."

With much questioning and many interruptions I learned at last that Manuela's father, Don Antonio de Valor, called by the Moors Aben Hamed, was a cousin of Aben Humega.

Don Antonio, who was averse to the Moorish rebellion, had remained a Christian, did not leave Grenada, and suffered as much abuse from his co-religionists as from the native Spaniards. Even

Don Antonio's two sons were enraged with him, and when the premeditated storming of the Alhambra was unsuccessful, they fled to the so-called King of the Alpujarras, Aben Humega, in the Sierra Nevada, and fell covered with honor in that unexampled war of extermination.

"You should have come to us sooner," interrupted the Düenna; "then you would have looked round you: it was not as it is now; Flanders carpets on the floors, tapestry of gold and silk on the walls; gold and silver goblets on the tables, that one thought they must break under them." We silenced the old woman with difficulty, and Manuela went on with the narrative.

"The insurrection was suppressed, the Moors scattered, fallen, or imprisoned. As long as the philanthropic Marquis of Mondejar ruled in Grenada, my father lived undisturbed in the seclusion to which his own wish and his diminished fortune consigned him; when the noble Marquis was recalled, my father was arrested as a secret devotee of Islamism. The King's half-brother, Don John of Austria, who next held the government, again set him free from prison. My father came here to live in peace, far from the remains of his former associations. For ten years he remained undisturbed; he went daily to church, but otherwise never left the house, employing the whole of his time in the study of learned writings and in my education.

“Half a year later a malignant fever tore my mother from us; hardly any one dared approach her bed except my father; she died in his arms. From the day my mother was buried, my father never crossed the threshold of the house. even I, who once could do anything with him, could not persuade him to go near the church.

“Twelve weeks ago yesternight—O God! I shall never forget that hour!—two familiars demanded admission to the house in the name of the Inquisition. Laura had the courage to admit them; I could not move from my place. They forced their way in, and dragged my father to the Castle of Triana, where he must defend himself from suspicion of heresy. An hour later everything in the house was searched and sealed; I had to look on, while they tore down my mother’s picture, because they thought treasure might be concealed behind it, and, as they expressed it, the seductive heathen’s face might have swallowed money.” Here Manuela suddenly stopped.

“I have told you all,” she then continued in a confiding tone; “I have neither misuse of it to fear, nor, alas! advantage from its use to hope.”

I used every inducement to comfort Manuela; but the old woman looked ghostly to me, as, during the latter part of the narration, she sat with folded hands and staring eyes, her lips moving mechanically in whispered prayer. Manuela did not notice

her; for I had succeeded in turning her mind from the sad visions of the past. Midnight had chimed when I arrived at my Posada. When I awoke next morning all seemed a dream.

I sought Manuela next day, and really believed I had reason to suppose it all a vision of my heated imagination.

Repentance for violated custom, trouble and doubt about the fate of her father, were evinced in every movement. She appeared completely altered; instead of bold, striving activity of mind, to-day she evinced mere broken will and slavish submission, and repulsed me from her.

I, like a fool, believed that the heavenly exultation that raised us above all considerations of everyday life could subsist forever with equal force. Angry, that now the celestial must give place to the terrestrial for me, I left Manuela, and only out of pity, and not to neglect a duty once undertaken, I went to Geronimo and told him all.

His sharp sight soon penetrated the state of affairs.

“The maiden is either an angel or a devil,” said he. “Habitual dissimulation, like habitual virtue, is not possible in such an extraordinary degree. The perfectly passive submission to a higher will, which has so deceived you, is merely the first article of the Credo of the Great Prophet. But set your mind at ease: I think I can manage to set old Valor

free, though he is as little a Christian as you and I. They found very little money belonging to him."

I wished not to revisit Manuela until her father was set at liberty, for that would most convincingly set her doubts at rest. That evening I again joined the company of my friends. With a loud "*ola amigo!*" I was greeted by the assembly; each one wanted to know the reason of my two days' absence, and each one explained it according to his own particular habit of mind and manners. I was gay and jovial. The next day after matins I again visited my brother. It was astonishing to me how quickly Don Antonio was set at liberty. For Geronimo had hardly laid the affair before the Inquisitor when they set him free. I was now permitted to accompany Don Antonio home. At the entrance of his dungeon I waited till he came out; for no one but the accused might enter those dark regions. When the emancipated prisoner came forth, it was evident what rack and chains had done for him. Don Antonio had hardly strength to stand upright; his eyes, at the unaccustomed light, streamed with tears until he was obliged to close them. I led him forth, and related what had happened during the last few days: his white lips tried to form a smile, for he perceived in my representation of events my love for Manuela.

"Does my child know of my liberation?" he asked, and forced open his eyes, whose wild look



went to my heart. I told him I wished to punish Manuela for her doubt, and that she should first see me again at his side. He did not answer, but shook his head, muttering some inaudible words. I was uncomfortable in his presence.

At last we arrived at Antonio's house. No one noticed us. With much labor, and stopping for breath at every step, Don Antonio mounted the staircase. We entered the room, and he sank into the easy-chair, in which he had borne his sorrows during so many years. Still no one was aware of our presence. I opened the inner door; in this room I saw Laura standing beside a bed, on which Manuela lay asleep. Don Antonio slid noiselessly past me. When the Duenna saw us she cried out in a fearfully shrill voice:

"O Jesu Maria, the master!" Manuela awoke, stared blankly at us for a time as if dreaming, and, trying to dispel the illusion, she passed her hand across her brow. "Manuela, my child!" cried Don Antonio. She rose quickly. "Father!" she cried, and fell sobbing on his neck. It was a rapturous moment, when words died away, powerless to express what soul would say to soul.

"Loose me, my child, loose me," said Don Antonio, and this time the tears that coursed down his hollow cheeks were of joy; "I am not strong enough to bear your caresses; command yourself, Manuela. See! there is our friend, our deliverer, Don Alfonso;



thank him, who was sent by God to deliver us in our need."

Manuela loosed her father. Her expressive eyes had again the same entreating yet defiant expression as when I first saw her; she threw herself on her knees before me, seized my hand, and covered it with tears and kisses.

"Pardon me, dear sir," she entreated; "I did not realize your power and greatness; pardon a poor inexperienced girl."

"Rise, Manuela, rise, I command you; that is not what I meant; that is not the way to give thanks," said Don Antonio; and Manuela obeyed.

From that time I visited Manuela daily. Her father was very ill. The muscular action that had been half destroyed by the rack the physician hoped he might be able to restore, but despaired of saving his sight.

Don Antonio had made them swear to conceal nothing from him regarding his state; and at this news inexpressible wrath filled his soul. "Man," he once said, "is the most abject creature on earth. What beast of prey would be so cruel—I will not say to those of his own species, but to such as it is born to lord it over—as one man is to another? The hungry tiger and the tearing wolf suck the blood from their prey, but that is mercy compared to men who kill by thousand-fold deaths. They have noble gifts, boldly inventive minds, and they

invent graves in which their fellow-creatures may rot alive. Oh, if I were but—”

He broke off, and gnashed his teeth. Manuela understood her father's condition; she did not venture to calm him with conversation, but she summoned all the resources of her wit to lighten his melancholy. The innumerable small attentions which she paid him so unassumingly, the wealth of little anecdotes and favorite reminiscences of her father's that flowed from her lips, the lively songs which she sang to her guitar accompaniment with all the freshness of youth—all this done in such a manner could only be prompted by a richly gifted mind.

Perhaps I wronged Manuela, but my vanity flattered itself that in causing this joyous outpouring of her inner life my presence had some part, as well as filial affection. We loved each other ever more and more tenderly and consciously. Don Antonio grew better day by day; some slight power of sight returned to his eyes by which he could see the outlines of objects as if covered with a dark veil. “Manuela,” I said one day to her, when we were alone during Don Antonio's siesta, “Manuela, may I at last take some steps towards our final union?”

“Please, please, do not speak to me of anything so serious; I am too young to think of such things,” she said.

“But I told you before that my love was not given to a child, but to a maiden with reason and will of her own.”

“And who is that happy creature?” laughed Manuela. “I forgot to ask.”

Then I swore I would no longer be put off with a jest; she must confess whether she knew her father’s intentions or not.

“No,” was the monosyllabic answer.

“And what have you determined to do, if your father—God forbid it—should refuse me?”

She answered in a decided voice, “Filial duty is above all others, but I will—” She could not finish, for Don Antonio called from his chamber, “What is that noise? What are you quarrelling about?”

“Don Alfonso will not believe that I was only fifteen a month ago.”

“That you were already fifteen, say rather, my child, for the older the man is, the worse for him in this cursed land.”

“Manuela is wrong,” I said to Don Antonio as he came out; “she has misinformed you; she would not believe me when I said I should go away to-morrow.”

“I am heartily sorry for that,” said the old man; “I should like to have you always near me. Men get accustomed to new friends with difficulty when they are old, at least to friends of your age; but

near you, I declare, I wish what I never wished before, to be young again, merely in order to be wholly your friend."

"Would you not rather be my father?" I felt how the blood rushed to my face, I saw how violently Manuela blushed, as I said these words with difficulty.

"Go, child," said Don Antonio indifferently, "go and fetch me that book from our neighbor, which he has had so long."

Manuela went out.

"I am much indebted to you," Don Antonio then said to me, "but it is not manly to clothe service and thanks in soft words; also, according to the rules of our religion, men should neither demand nor offer thanks, since in all our goings and comings we are but tools in the hand of God. I do not know whether that is why there is so much ingratitude in the world; but now, ask what you would have, you shall have it, except my child, my Manuela! I cannot do without her, she is as needful to my life as the air I breathe, and as long as I live she shall be no man's wife. Press it no further, spare yourself and me the bootless words." I was stunned, and could say nothing; tears stood in my eyes, I took my hat, and went out. Don Antonio called after me to return, but I did not turn round. Manuela met me on the steps; I hardly saw her, and hastened away.

I went to Geronimo, and told him of my intention to travel, and the reason of it.

"It is not Manuela," he said, "whom you fly from: it is from yourself, from the inclinations of your own heart, you are forced to run; but they will follow you as your shadow, they will not vanish with distance; no, ever lovelier and more fascinating will they appear; and in longing and deferred hope you will linger on in sickness of mind. The Lord defend you doubly and trebly from the other course. Trust me, for you know that I too have loved, and my dead Isabella will live in my heart until it shall cease to beat. Therefore guard carefully your first love, or see to it that you take with you the certainty of your former delusion. Man yourself, and go again to Manuela."

I willingly followed his advice.

That evening I went to take leave of my joyous circle of friends. All congratulated me on my lovely bride; one said I was truly condescending still to remember my friends, when I was on the point of uniting myself with a descendant of the Chalifs of Cordova.

"The family is as noble as that of Ponce de Leon; and he who denies it, I will plant the point of my sword in his heart as the stem of a family tree," I replied, and was ready to follow my words with deeds.

All sprang up to appease the quarrel. My good



humor, however, was ruffled by this, and I sought an opportunity to return home. I shook hands with one after the other, but they all cried, "No, we will not let you go that way; you shall see how much we think of you; we will go to your beloved's house with you, and send a musical scale of your feelings for her into that quiet chamber where she lies and dreams of you." The guitars and other instruments were quickly taken down from the walls of the Posada, and their harmony tried by a touch, and the throats cleared with another pull at the wine of La Mancha mixed with water. I thanked them, and protested against their intention, but all to no purpose.

"Will you not go with us?" they all cried together. "Very well, we will go alone; and to-morrow you will hear wonders of the heaven-storming love messages we have sent up to her." To temper their recklessness I went with them through the deserted streets with a beating heart; naught else was to be heard but the echoing steps and careless laughter of our jovial company. Hardly was our first "Farewell" sung, when the windows of the neighboring houses were filled with inquisitive fair ones in light night-gear; the house of Manuela alone remained blank and silent.

My friends retired; I remained, and sang one more song of melancholy farewell; but still no one appeared, and I unwillingly returned home.



I went early next morning to Manuela's house with a doubting heart and trembling limbs. I surprised her in her light morning-gown; she gave a slight exclamation, and without answering my greeting disappeared through the inner door, which she closed after her.

"Good-morning, you haughty fugitive knight! Has your hot head left its ill-humors in its night-cap?" she called through to me laughingly. "Now who was right, father?" she continued; "do I not know something of human nature? Did I not say Don Alfonso would come again? I was certain of it. Now, Sir knight, as you have won me a victory over my father, I allow you, by virtue of my authority to bind and to loose, to remain three days longer in Seville, if you lay the penance upon yourself of making a pilgrimage every day to St. Manuela, and kneeling before her praying for an hour; or would you prefer some other favor?"

"Yes," I replied, "this: that you would not waste our limited number of minutes on unnecessary ornamentation, but come out as soon as possible."

She made no reply, but sang the "Farewell" of the previous evening in a trembling voice. She had hardly finished the first verse before she came out with her arms folded under a gray cloak.

"You Hotspur!" said she, "you are so niggardly with your seconds, you do not leave me time to dress myself properly. I am such a child, that for

fear you should run away as you did yesterday evening, I come wrapped in an old mantle of my late mother's; but it is such an awkward old-fashioned thing, that I cannot hold it on long, so be quick that you may go away soon, or leave me now and come back again shortly."

"I shall not cause you inconvenience long, Señora," I replied, irritated at her last words; she perceived it, and walked backwards and forwards with her eyes fixed on the ground.

"If we must part," she said, "I should prefer to do so now; I see by your continued agitation that the memories which should illuminate our dark future will be colorless and broken. My father knows how much I love you, I have concealed nothing from him; Heaven grant that your love is equal to mine! I wish for nothing more. But I also know how to obey." Don Antonio sat silently in his arm-chair, wrapped in his dressing-gown, his hands clasped between his knees, and his shoulders bowed.

"What purifying fires of adversity has your mutual love stood yet?" he murmured in a strange voice, without moving in the least from his cowering position.

"It was born in adversity," I answered, "but we should soon forget that both freely and willingly."

"What would you have?" he cried, and rose trembling from his seat. "Because by chance you

aided in my deliverance do you seek to rob me doubly and trebly of life, since you would rob me of my child's love and obedience. I have given you all, you proud Spaniards; you have sapped my trunk, drop by drop, of strength and power; I am but a dried stick; but as sure as the blood of the old Valors runs in my veins, my child, my life you shall not rob me of, as long as this hand has strength to bury this dagger in her weak maiden's heart. Go! old fool that I am, I was deluded into thinking you better than others. Go! you are as covetous and mischievous as all the rest."

His voice sounded like a war-cry, his foaming lips trembled with rage; he sank back powerless into his chair. Manuela hastened to him, stretched her bare arms towards him, and prayed him to be quiet.

"O God, where shall I turn to!" she cried. "I saw my mistake, offered Don Antonio my hand, and prayed him to forget the words he had just spoken as readily as I, too, would forget them, that we might part in peace. He pressed my hand convulsively.

"You irritated me too much," he said, "Don Antonio de Valor was never ungrateful, and never permitted such an accusation to be made to his face. My child is mine, as much my own as my right hand; shall I cut it off, and give it you with thanks? I am angry no more, certainly not; be

patient, it is but a short span of life that I have yet to pass, and I shall not make the time longer."

He sat up, and concentrated all his powers of sight to read the effect of his words on our countenances; he must have found something satisfactory, for he continued in a gentler voice:

"I intended so well by you that in the spring who knows whether I may not come to Guadaluaxara, to try, with your learned father's aid, to sharpen the sight of my bodily and spiritual eyes."

"Oh, that would be glorious!" said Manuela joyfully; "I will take such care of you, that you will be quite young again. How far will you come to meet us, Don Alfonso?"

The conversation now took a gayer tone.

"I never thought it would all end so well; it is lucky my father's old sword is rusted in its sheath on the wall, or perhaps our room would have been a bloody battle-field," said Manuela, her gayety blooming yet brighter through grief and tears.

Don Antonio did not speak again; but, amid memories of the past and plans for the future, I felt that the moment of separation had arrived, for I must tear myself away from such joyous associations. I put out my hand to take leave of Don Antonio.

"Depart in peace," he said; "at peace with yourself and with us; remember me to your worthy father."

“And shall we soon see each other again?” I asked; he pressed my hand and nodded assent. Manuela stood by motionless; our eyes met, as if each would impress the image of the other once more on the memory; the grief of parting agitated both alike, and each sought to repress it.

“Manuela, farewell!” I said, approaching my beloved.

“Farewell,” she answered in a firm voice; “I am certain that you will never forget me; and, if it is fated that we should at one time belong to each other, we shall find each other again; if it is otherwise decreed, what is the use of complaint and opposition? Obedience is our duty. Be happy therefore with another, who, however, will not love you more than I have done; but all the powers of earth and heaven shall not prevent me from loving you till death and after. Farewell!”

I embraced her father again passionately; I believe I should have pressed the Grand Inquisitor himself to my heart. I know nothing more of how I tore myself away, but at the house-door the Duenna stopped me, and strange to say, every word of her address remains in my memory; I seem even to hear her voice—

It often annoys us, but it is wisely ordained, that near a nightingale there is always a cuckoo or some other every-day bird, or a frog croaks in the marsh.

“The world is always the same,” the old woman



began, as she kissed the hem of my mantle. "Laura, who means better than any one else in the world, is forgotten by every one. You must not think I have run after you to be thanked, for I do not know myself what for. But you are so proud that you hardly say 'Good-day' to Laura, and yet I have stood a good deal for you; I at least deserved that your Honor should say 'Good-by' to me. I should have been offended if I were not so long used to the ingratitude of the world. Holy Mary, Mother of God, be with me! poor sinner that I am, I could wish in my heart that they would bring me the last sacrament, and give me a house of six boards. Our dear good Don Alfonso goes away, and we shall have Ash Wednesday the whole year round. As St. Jago is good to me, you may believe me, if I were not so fond of Manuela I would not stay twenty-four hours with the old cripple, who makes a face like Judas every day in the year; and that good child, what she suffers from him no one knows. Oh! it would be well enough for you, if only I need not suffer from it. If it is all settled among ourselves, no one will tell a whisper of it abroad; you see what it is not to have old experienced persons who have been much about in the world for advisers. In my last situation I brought a pair together, whom the old ones were much more against than is our old grumbler upstairs; but they were not so proud that for mere billing and cooing they have over-



looked their best friend under their very noses. It is true they rewarded me at last with ingratitude—but that is nothing. ‘If you give to-day, you are forgotten to-morrow,’ so says the proverb; and a proverb is a true speech. If you had but given me a wink, I would have contrived it better. You may be good and brave enough, but—don’t be offended, your Honor; I mean well, as sure as I am a sinner—you are not clever. For six long weeks you have sneaked round it like a cat after hot meat. Why, the very next day, the very next hour, you brought the old man home, you should have wooed my sweet little dove. Put it to yourself, could he have refused you? ‘Press the lemon dry before it is rotten,’ says the proverb; but ‘in six weeks—St. James! what cannot be forgotten in six weeks! I don’t wonder he wipes his mouth, and dismisses you with a mere *Gratias*! There is no one prouder than a knight of the hills, but I always thought he was half a heathen—I would not stay in the house if it were not for the good child, who is as dear to me as if she were my own babe. I tell you I have seen many lovers; I myself, stare as you will, was once young and charming, and had good reason to show myself. I was very fond of my first husband—very fond indeed; but I never thought to see any one in love as Manuela is, my whole life long. What does the old man care? For him she might wait till her hair was gray and her soft flesh

wrinkled; his life is tough enough, he will not die yet awhile; he will give her to no one else. God be merciful to me, I believe he would marry her himself, if it were not against nature. Oh! it makes my heart jump in my breast when I think how pleasant everything might have been; it would have been so different, and old Laura might then have had the pleasure of rocking a rosy young Manuelita or Alfonsito in her arms. But it is all talking to the winds now, and I keep you here for nothing. Don't take it amiss, your Honor; make haste to come back soon, then let Laura act, and you will see how well things will turn out."

I listened to the old woman, half unwillingly, as if compelled. Now I offered her some doubloons as a farewell; she said she would not take them; she did not know what they were for; she had not earned them. After some protest she took them, and with a roguish expression of gratitude said:

"You should have seen sooner the truth of the proverb: 'Presents move rocks.' Have you no more commissions for Manuela?"

I knew of none; she kissed my hand, and went away grumbling and muttering at the heathenish bald-head. After an hour passed in visiting Geronimo I had left Seville. I saw clearly that here was a turning-point in my career that would influence my whole life.

But what are the intentions and decisions of men?

A puff of wind, a shadow, disturbs them, and they are no more.

More than a year passed away; I had written twice to Manuela and her father, but received no answer. Her lovely image receded more and more into the background of my soul; the exclusiveness and self-sufficiency in which I had wrapped myself disappeared by degrees. The retreat of our uncle in Madrid and his family from our secret society, his bitter repentance, and the penance he did for the former half-heartedness of his faith, filled us all with grief and anxiety. The powerful Espinosas now in Spain are the descendants of this uncle. But not by a single betrayal of his coreligionists did he seek to lighten the hard penance laid upon him. We heard, however, from Geronimo that through a new edict of the Inquisition, which we had believed would affect the Moorish Christians alone, the Jewish Christians also would be exiled to Africa.

Amid anxiety for myself and those belonging to me, the memory of Manuela revived with all the fascinations of her angelic being. I saw the finger of God in it, when Rodrigo Casseres, who was travelling to Seville, offered to take charge of my commissions there.

I represented in my letter to Manuela all the horrors that awaited us, and besought her to come to us immediately with her father, that we might

bear the future together. Almost without hope of any result, and merely to fulfil love's last duty, I sent off the letter.

My breast filled with a thousand cares and anxieties, and blaming our ancestors, who had laid on us a daily, ever-recurring, inglorious martyrdom, and doubled-faced religion, as an inheritance, I sauntered one day along the country road. There I saw a carriage advancing at a slow rate; I approached. A look, a cry, and Manuela was in my arms. As if by magical attraction had she lightly sprung over the side of the carriage. I quickly got into the conveyance with her, and drew the curtains, then drove towards the gate. Don Antonio sat by Manuela, wrapped in a large woollen rug; he, too, congratulated himself on the lucky accident that had allowed us to meet so soon.

"If I had gone much longer over hill and dale," he said, "Manuela would have brought me to you as a corpse; the journey rattled all my limbs together so, that I thought I was on the rack again. You have succeeded to your heart's content, have you not, Manuela, now you have persuaded the old fool to this long journey? Yes, yes; my life is worth nothing now; the sooner I die the better, is it not. Never mind, I shall not last long."

With a mocking laugh he scowled at us both, and pushed Manuela's arm away.

If his former refusal had seemed diabolical ava-

rice to me before, the way he now poisoned his own child's happiness made it difficult for me to conquer my disgust; but he was nevertheless Manuela's father. Manuela understood how to dispel my annoyance by innumerable little questions and reminiscences. She easily succeeded, for what an infinitude we had to say to each other. But how strange it is, that, while a hundred important questions crowd into the mind, it is so often the least important that first forms itself into words!

"How is old Laura?" I inquired.

"She is dead, the false viper! Hear what happened to her. Hardly seven months since my father lay very ill (he has hardly enjoyed a month's health during your absence). Laura fell ill also; she was taken to the hospital of San Lorenzo, which she made heir to all her possessions. Her illness increased; she was incurable. After she had received the final sacrament, she expressed as a last wish that they should bring me to her; she could not die in peace till she had spoken to me once more alone. My father, too, advised me to go to her, and with almost insuperable disinclination I allowed myself to be conducted to the hospital. I should hardly have recognized Laura, so emaciated she had become in a few weeks; she, however, knew me at once, and wept as she stretched out her bony hands to me. Her habitual talkativeness had not yet deserted her, and in a low voice, broken by groaning



and moaning, she avowed to me, that it was she who in confession to the priest had told that my father never went to church, and worshipped heathen gods in secret.

“The confessor, for this godly act, had absolved her from all her sins; but now it seemed to her as if she could not die before I too had forgiven her for the many troubles that had ensued to me in consequence. I must remember that she had pledged her own soul that I was a good Christian child, and thus I had been safe; I must remember, she said—and the old wretch winked with her half-closed eyes—that it was only so that I had come to know that dear good Don Alfonso, and she promised me soon to pray in heaven for our union. I thanked her for her good intentions, but could not embitter her dying hour, and forgave her, I must confess, with a not wholly willing heart.”

I then told Manuela of my last conversation with Laura, and amid such talk we reached my father's house. The arrivals were very welcome to my father. Old Valor was carried up the steps, and their limited baggage soon stowed in its place. My sister, who was some years older than Manuela, was soon her dearest friend, so that she felt completely at home with us.

We quietly prepared for our departure, but the infirm state of Don Antonio, in which he would not hear of a journey, made us all anxious; my father,



who was reputed to be the most experienced physician in New Castile, feared that he would linger long. We were astonished one morning, therefore, to find him dead in bed, with a frightfully swollen countenance. For this once, when Manuela first saw the horrible state of her father's face, her bodily powers sank unconscious under the burden of her woe; otherwise she had endured with fortitude all the vicissitudes of life.

My father thought that he had not the appearance of a natural death; and in fact, when the body was laid out, the amulet that Don Antonio had worn on his breast since his last imprisonment was found open and empty, and nowhere were to be discovered the remains of any poison. Manuela never heard anything of this circumstance.

As old Valor was now dead, my father thought our departure should be deferred no longer. The departed had left no intimation of his last will: what was more natural than that Manuela should travel with us? My father charged me to remind her to take into speedy consideration her somewhat unsettled affairs. I went to her, and found her alone, weeping, and pensive.

"We all honor you for these signs of filial affection," I said; "but why give yourself up any longer to such melancholy thoughts? My father will be your father, and I—you know what I would be to you."

“No, never!” she answered. “Have pity on me, poor orphan that I am, and let me go to my uncle in Valencia. He will not visit my father’s enmity on me; he will not repel his sister’s child. How willingly would I remain with you! but I see too late that an iron wall separates us forever.”

“Do you know already?” I asked impatiently. “Did my sister confide it to you? Believe me, long ago my heart felt guilty of cowardly perjury not to have confessed everything to you; you would never have betrayed me. Yes, I am a Jew, and will stand by my oppressed brethren in the faith as long as a breath of life remains in me; and if you can desert me, well and good—you never loved me. Go to your uncle; no one will prevent you.”

Manuela stared at me with despairing eyes.

“You are cruel, Señor,” she said; “I should never have thought you could be so. Who has given you the right to treat me with such scorn, and yet that I must love you? Think you that I am faint-hearted, and ashamed of my faith? Say outright—I know you adhere to Islam, as your dead father did—and I will embrace your knees and beg forgiveness, but do not mock me. What have I done to you?”

A torrent of tears choked her voice; she turned from me sobbing. “O father, father!” she cried, “they treat your child so; why did you not take me with you into your grave?”

I called down all the curses of Heaven on my

head if I had not told the truth. She looked at me kindly again, and the tears in her eyes witnessed her extreme sorrow for the injustice she had done me, and for the awful abyss that opened before our eyes.

“So near, and yet so infinitely far!” she said, giving me her hand in reconciliation. I besought her by all her former depth of love.

“God is a God of love wherever he is worshipped—in church, mosque, or synagogue. Were it not the will of God, should we have found and refound each other?” In fiery words I placed before her the differences of creed as they appeared to lovers; I troubled myself but little about what was written in books or taught by priests. God forgive me, I should not like to answer for it all now. Manuela but half listened to me, and cried in a heart-rending voice:

“Lord God, destroy me not because I still doubt. What law have I broken that you should lay on me so intolerable a burden? Can I cast out the faith of my childhood from my mind, and yet live? Why should I, even I, a weak girl, be fated to be Moslem at heart and Christian in appearance, at last to give the lie to both? Is there not one more Temple through which I may be hunted, and my poor heart torn asunder? My father was wrong to throw an old gypsy woman down the steps, as he did three years ago, so that I thought she would never get

up again; he did it because she prophesied that I should not die in my present faith, and that I was born for great things: I wish I knew what the great things were to be. If the old witch should return, how surprised she would be at her own wisdom!" A shriek of horror interrupted Manuela's words.

"It is black art that plays such tricks!" she cried, and shrank close to me in fear. I glanced at the door: there stood an old gypsy woman leaning on a staff, and asking me for alms with a shrewd laugh. I soothed Manuela, who trembled all over; she recovered herself, however, and approaching the gypsy bravely, asked:

"Do you know me?"

"Why not, then?" answered the old woman, and raised her grinning face to hers. "Look, I have a good memorial of you—that scar over my left eye, I got it at your house in Seville. What do you say now to my prophecies? are they not fulfilled?"

"I do not know," answered Manuela.

"You don't know. Ay, ay, but I know."

"Thank you very much for your wisdom," answered Manuela, handing her a present.

"Just a minute yet: give me that little velvet hand; I know many another thing."

Manuela only half opposed her. The old woman chuckled so much when she had looked at the lines on the hand for a time, that her stick fell from her grasp.

“That is beyond everything,” she cried. “Look here! such a finely marked life-line I have only had to look at once before: a handsome knight will come and carry you over the sea; you may rely on it; it is as certainly true—as true as that I would I were as young and fair as you. Do you see that little line that goes across there? That means much sorrow and heartache. But wait a minute; you must listen to this: that is a fine boy that you will bear. You need not turn so red. There is a bold, widely famed knight, whom no one can stand against in the lists; he gives his strokes with such a sure, quiet aim, that all his adversaries are stretched on the sand; that circle outwards, that is a crown he refuses.”

Such, and much more such, were the fool’s jests that the garrulous old woman told us; I still wonder at myself for having retained such nonsense in my memory. Manuela seemed, however much she tried to hide it, to believe more than I; I never cared much for such things, and we have the clearest evidence now as to what they are worth. She would have prophesied for me also, but I had other things to do and think of. I gave her money, and told her to go on her way.

By this strange incident Manuela’s extreme agitation, which had made me tremble, was happily diverted. I now quietly represented the case to her, and she, too, was quiet. I was obliged to promise



not to disturb her with another word until the next morning.

"I will think over it all faithfully and conscientiously," she said; "no one may, no one can, advise me here."

When I awoke next morning my first thought was: to-day the course of my whole future life will be decided. It is not possible in such emergencies to remain master of our thoughts; anxiety and impatience disturb us too much. I hastened out on to the Alameda, spurred my horse, as if I could quicken the time like his paces and make the seconds run on, that I might at last go to Manuela.

"God alone knows how I have struggled," she said as she came to me. "You have won; but I entreat you, let us go away from here. I can bear this place no longer." I told my father everything.

"You have not done well, my son," said he, "to put such unequal weights in the scale; what you tell me is no news to me: but the maiden should not have been won to our faith and family with a broken spirit. I will explain to her all the hard duties which our faith enjoins, all the sorrows it is still condemned to bear; if then she still holds to her decision, may God grant his blessing, and make her the mother of a pious progeny!"

Manuela stood firm.

There was now nothing to prevent our departure. When we had with much difficulty put our posses-



sions into a portable form, Immanuel started with our sister and Manuela, for we were obliged to do our utmost to avoid attracting notice. The night after, I followed with my father. I could hardly restrain my tears as we slipped through the familiar streets like thieves, surrounded by fear and darkness. Oh! we loved our step-fatherland with all our hearts; I feel it now. My father did not utter a syllable. When the red dawn first rose he commanded me there to take the sun to my witness, and swear by God Almighty, that I would not take Manuela to me as my own till she was accepted into our faith and bound to me in the bonds of marriage.

We overtook the others, and arrived after many difficulties at Oporto. There we dwelt with the father of Uriel da Costa till the day of our departure. We met Mendez Henrico from Madrid here; he left an honorable post at court, and a passionately beloved bride, to confess his faith with his brethren in a distant land. He was a taciturn fellow-traveller. A fearful curse, such as no tongue of man ever spoke before, he called down on unhappy Spain as we raised the anchor; his eyes rolled like a madman's, he gnashed his teeth and stamped his foot, till I was afraid of his wrath, and strove to soothe him. Without replying, or even looking round, he went to the other end of the ship, leant against a coil of ropes in a lonely corner,

and cowered down. I had enough to do for my own people, and left Henrico to his own devices.

Our journey was fair in the beginning; the change of scene reawakened Manuela's gayety. But my father fell ill the first evening. He tried, as heretofore, to avert the evil by strong medicines: but it was no use; he grew worse from hour to hour.

"It is strange," he said to me once, as I sat beside his bed: "here I lie, old child that I am, in a great cradle, that will rock the life out of me. Do not throw my body out on to the cold flood. As Joseph once his brethren, so I conjure you, my children, take my bones and bury them in the land whereto the Lord will lead you; I feel that my eyes will never see it more."

I tried to divert him from such thoughts, but he said: "I know my hours are numbered. I have experienced much joy and much sorrow in this world; glory and thanks be to the Lord our God for both! Come, call my children—Manuela too; she also is my child; you will be happy with her. Do not weep," he said to them as they entered. "I sink into the grave in peace, for I know that you will go on unmolested, and may live at peace with your God; but should an oppressor's hand repulse you, despair not, for the law of our God, the Infinite and only One, will one day be gloriously recognized by all nations."

My father talked much longer about the regu-

lation of our future life; his approaching death seemed to have lent him insight into unknown contingencies. He blessed us each singly, and departed after a few hours with prayerful lips. Since then I have seen the spirits of many depart from the body, but I have never since seen so celestially peaceful a countenance. Our tears flowed plentifully, but Manuela wept most violently; she was an orphan a second time. When a return of life to the body was hopeless, we emptied a large chest quietly, and wrapped the corpse in the winding-sheet my mother had prepared. A bag of earth from the promised land, for which my father had given much gold, lay beside the shroud. We placed this holy earth under his head, and laid the coffin in the lowest cabin, where my brother watched it.

It was a foggy morning when we proceeded onward. Towards midday a violent storm arose, with all the horrors of which I had hitherto only heard the narration in the numerous stories of my father's travels. I thanked God that he had spared him this fresh affliction, and sought by these thoughts to soothe the trembling maidens.

The captain came to us, and ordered us in few words to bring him the chest immediately wherein the corpse lay, that he might not be obliged to overturn everything, and lose much time thereby; it was a well-known rule that the sea would not

become smooth until the corpse that a ship might hold was given up as an offering. I tried to pacify him, but was foolish enough to strive to show him the absurdity of his superstition. He had nearly stabbed me for my advice; if Manuela had not held his arm. I would have left my father's last wishes only unfulfilled by my death, and prepared for opposition; the girls wailed and wept; the whole ship's company came, and I was obliged to comply. When we had loaded the coffin with ballast, that it might sink, I came with it into the raging elements, and with a bleeding heart saw how the high swelling waves closed over the offered prey. For a long time my rest was sunk with it. The whole ship was in frightful commotion; one man alone stood unmoved amid the uproar: it was Mendez Henrico. A cocked pistol in one hand, and holding on with all his strength to a rope with the other, he stood on the deck.

"What do you want? are you mad?" I cried to him; he smiled pityingly.

"Do you see the sea there?" he said; "do you see? It is a great font; we shall all be baptized there according to the rites of the Greek Church; but they shall not compel me to it while I live—they, whom the elements deceive so slavishly. If that breaks (here he pointed to the mast), this ball shall burn in my heart; I will not—" At that moment the mast crashed down, a shot resounded, and

Henrico fell head first overboard. I felt crushed by all that was around me; we were playthings in the hands of the storm.

My son, whoever would learn what is the good of his own life and of what he knows of the world, and what is worthless in it, he will learn it best if he be placed with all he is and has on the boundless ocean. During that storm and the ensuing calm I saw deeper into the meaning of things than ever before. It was to me like the forty years' wandering in the wilderness of our forefathers; the old generation shall not enter into the promised land; it died out in me, and a new man saw the abode of freedom before him.

We landed at last in Antwerp, and it was in a season of mourning that I first learnt to love our new home.

For thirty days, as the law ordains, I mourned for my father; but for a much longer period I deplored my inability to carry out his last wishes. Manuela was meanwhile accepted as a member of the Jewish congregation, and at her side I found that peace and happiness for which I eternally thank God. We had both many hard struggles in life. We had both imagined the exercise of Judaism in a free community to be a very different thing; we did not know how strong the ties of habit were in us, and I especially could not reconcile myself to the mere freedom to live a life

hemmed in by a thousand religious observances. God Almighty will forgive my sins, I have learned to know that His Holy Will is over all, and that the observance of the Law alone leads to him. We have devoted all we have to the end that our children might grow up in the peace of true faith. Be thankful for it. You above all, my son.

Such is the story of my life and of my love, written for my only son, Baruch, alone.



## CHAPTER VI.

### TALMUD AND LATIN.

**B**ARUCH'S hand trembled as he laid the pages aside, and his brow was hot as he leant it on his hand.

What confusion there is in the life of humanity thus divided into races and sects, each one of which hates and persecutes the other, and thinks itself alone wise and righteous! Thus the Temples become encampments, where the watchword given out is salvation to the initiated, damnation to all the rest.

A voice stronger and more piercing than that of the synagogue now called upon Baruch to pronounce the blessing on the revealed unwritten Law, whose two pillars are freedom from all shackles of race or creed, and love to all mankind. Had not Maimonides already taught that "the pious of all religions shall inherit eternal felicity?" Baruch was no longer a son of Israel only; he was the child of humanity. It was not his descent alone that gave him this impulse thus to classify himself, though possibly it was the first motive. The spirit of life, the Spirit of God, seized upon him, carried

him over all boundaries, and held him firm and free in blissful uncertainty.

At first when his father called him on the morrow he remembered with difficulty who and where he was. He returned the manuscript to his father and kissed his hand: he held his son's hand fast in his, and walked with him to the synagogue.

Baruch answered the congratulations of those who waited at the door of the place of worship to honor him on his attainment of the Rabbinical dignity but absently and inappropriately. The people thought him conceited.

This supposition had some truth in it when after early service on the Sunday morning he went, with his richly clasped folio under his arm, along the road to the school called the "Crown of Law."

With what joyous haste he had formerly trodden that path—and now he stared confusedly about him, almost stumbling at every step. A feeling of mingled sadness and pride filled his heart: must he still follow this road as before; still study the same books, and what new thing could he find in them? He had attained the rank of Rabbi, the highest attainable in this career, and he must go on studying the same subjects by which men merely sharpened their cleverness into conceit. He was familiar with all that could be learnt there; what was the use of eternal repetition? But more painful still was the thought that he had become a

stranger to it, for the experience of the previous day had lifted him above all that was customary to him. Was it not a sin to go on just the same as if nothing had happened? The Jewish community and its doctrines no longer formed the heart of the world, all the rest being but its shell. Houses were built there, ships launched, streets laid out, indifferent to this narrow circle; bells tolled and called to the worship of other sanctuaries. Where is centred the life of the world? The boy, ripened into a courageous youth, would willingly have penetrated to those eternal halls,—and it was but the door of the School of Law that opened to him now. He could not understand that this world had not suddenly changed to another, because it seemed to have changed to him. Why was it impossible, when thus awakened to conscious existence, to begin life anew?

The world goes on in its accustomed grooves.

The wounds of early youth heal quickly; doubts are soon extinguished, whether in forgetfulness or in habitual repression by the will.

When Baruch had entered the school he was, as is the habit of youth, quickly engaged with the immediate interest of the moment; all others had vanished. Rabbi Saul Morteira pointed to the place on his left; that on his right hand Chisdai held by right of seniority. The other students sat at the long table in order of age or attainments, “at

the feet of the Rabbi." The master commanded Baruch to read out the Friday's unfinished extract. It was the place in the Talmud tractate, *Kiduschin*, folio 22. Baruch read:

"It is written, Deuteronomy xxi. 10: 'When thou goest forth to war with thine enemies, and the Lord thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, that thou hast taken them captive, and seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her that thou wouldst have her to thy wife: . . . This indulgence is granted because the Israelites had not abstained therefrom; and it is better that they should do that which is permitted than that they should do that which is forbidden.'"

Baruch had hardly read for a few minutes, when a violent dispute arose between him and Chisdai. The great schoolman, Rabbi Samuel Edels, had added a problem to this proposition, and ended with the words, "a solution is to be found for this."

Chisdai thought he had discovered it, but one of the youngest scholars at the lower end of the table made him in a few words the butt of universal ridicule. Chisdai sprang up, and would have stormed the saucy youth into silence, but Baruch stood up and ranged himself on the side of the boy. Chisdai turned to the adversary whom he deemed his equal; he drew himself up and stretched out his bedaubed fingers till they stood

out like a palisade of notes of exclamation: he laughed compassionately, and with ironic astonishment shook his learned head over the weak grounds taken against him; but Baruch pressed him more and more hotly, till at last Chisdai, shaking himself free, rushed at his opponent; he seized him by his cloak and would not allow him to say another word. Chisdai struck the table, turned himself from side to side, first to one and then another; it was all no good. Baruch had placed him in a dilemma by his tranquillity, from which he could not free himself. Chisdai sat down and bit his nails. Baruch quite simply explained the problem.

"It seems strange to me," he then said, "that a thing should be permitted because it was done; that could be done in many another case as well."

"The punishment of him who marries a gentile follows immediately," said Chisdai with a delighted face that no one understood but Baruch and himself; "for, as the Talmud says, directly after these verses follow those of the rebellious son, because of such a marriage only the godless could be the fruit."

Baruch did not answer him. "Then is this the conclusion," he inquired of the Rabbi, "that a marriage with a gentile is no sin?"

"You see that it is so," replied the Rabbi, "but only in time of war."

"Can God make one law for war and another for peace?"

“Why not? There are many laws that refer only to Palestine. Stand by the word: here it speaks only of war, not of peace.”

“Excuse me,” persisted Baruch; “I must ask something else. Just after this verse it stands written: If a man have two wives, he loves one but not the other; the permission to wed many wives is granted for war and peace, for Palestine and other lands; why is it no longer so?”

“You know well enough that Rabbi Gerschon, ‘the Light of the Exile,’ laid those of all time under the ban who should wed more than one wife.”

“But how dare he do so, since it is nowhere forbidden in the Holy Scriptures; and according to the Talmud, King Solomon was merely forbidden to wed more than eighteen wives?”

“I believe you think,” replied the Rabbi, “that the Sanhedrim of Mainz did not know that as well as you. I cannot now explain everything, you are not alone here; if you ask sophistical questions, I cannot keep the others waiting till I answer them. Chisdai, read on.”

Chisdai did as commanded. The whole reading was in a tone commonly believed to be traditional; half melancholy chanting, half recitation as of a litany, as little according to the rules of declamation or music as a grammar would be according to rule if extracted from the Babel of dialects in the Talmud. Each student sought to combine new



problems from the many sophistical questions in the text and their numerous commentaries, again to be drawn out in striking syllogisms, etc. In spite of the license of intellectual activity shown on all sides, a certain defined order was unmistakable. The Rabbi listened carefully to all the questions, and then, according as he considered the solution easy or difficult, he called upon this one or that to answer it.

Chisdai, who sat next to the Rabbi's chair, nodded kindly to the younger ones, whose first efforts in dialectic made them timid, with condescending encouragement. He smiled like a general, who, in the anticipation of speedy advancement, claps his subordinate good-naturedly on the shoulder when he has successfully led in some small skirmish. When a pause intervened, he brought two plainly opposed views of the great Maimonides into the field of battle, while against the views here laid down he brought up one of contrary signification from the tractate of Chetuboth, with much circumlocution and cunning. All were silent.

"Now, Baruch, what do you say to that?" asked the Rabbi. Baruch aroused himself as if from a dream, for he had been employed on a very different train of thought.

"Now Baruch, what do you say to what Chisdai advances?" repeated the Rabbi.

"He is perfectly correct," was the quick answer.

A peal of laughter, begun by Chisdai, echoed from one end of the table to the other.

“Where are your thoughts again?” asked the Rabbi softly. “Not on his words alone, but on his thoughts, a man must place a curb. Now who can answer Chisdai’s question?”

No one replied. Then Chisdai triumphantly brought forward a finely woven chain of arguments and authorities, with which he brilliantly solved the apparently insoluble problem. Baruch tried forcibly to master his wandering thoughts; with painful diligence he repeated the words of the text before him: it was all of no use; his mind unconsciously glided over the words to other subjects. He soon gave up the application afforded him by the whole discussion to his mother’s history; the doubts which had arisen in him as to the eternal validity and immutability of the Law, he thought he had repressed by persuading himself that his teacher was not sufficiently learned to answer such questions, or held him as yet unworthy to partake of the tree of knowledge. Much that had been nearly erased from his memory arose within him again fresher than ever, and he was glad when he heard his fellow pupils close their great folios, and the Rabbi rise with a heavy sigh.

At home he sat down to table in silence with a feeling of general discontent. His father left him undisturbed, but Miriam looked at him inquir-

ingly. They talked of the approaching departure of Rodrigo Casseres, and the anticipated company of his family.

“What is the matter with you to-day, Baruch?” asked his father when the meal was over. “You used always to recollect the saying of ‘the fathers’: ‘When three sit together at table and speak no godly word, it is as though they partook of a funeral feast.’ Must I remind you to read a passage from the Mishna before grace?”

Baruch rose, fetched the handsome quarto, and repeated the paragraphs before him. To-day, for the first time, he found it tiresome that he could not put a bit between his teeth without some consideration of the old laws.

“I have already thought about your wishes to-day,” said his father; “I have found you a Latin master. But go on reading; I will tell you afterwards.”

Baruch read the appointed number of verses more quickly than usual, but not to betray to his father by ending too soon how much interested he was in the deferred information, he read two more paragraphs; his thoughts, however, did not follow the lines his eyes and mouth read. He ascribed this fault to his father’s words, for he would not confess to himself, or was not fully conscious, what an immeasurable change had come over him. He closed the book, and looked expectantly at his father, who

commanded him to repeat the long Hebrew grace. Lucky force of habit! If Baruch had not repeated this prayer several times daily since his earliest childhood, he would now have made many stumbles therein; for while thanking God for bodily nourishment, and praying for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, his mind passed to the gods of Rome and Athens, and rejoiced in the intellectual nourishment which Aristotle and the Roman historians would offer him.

After the "Amen" his father rose and lighted a cigar, saying:

"When I have smoked this, Baruch, we will go together to Salomon de Silva. I bit the sour apple unwillingly at first, but it was so easily arranged, that I have quite given up all opposition. I accompanied Rodrigo Casseres to the Amstel to-day, where he took the boat for Leyden; and as I was returning, our friend the Doctor met me. I doubt the people make much too much of your dignity of Rabbi; do not let them make you conceited with such talk."

"Certainly not," answered Baruch, without looking up. How changed his father was to-day! Where was his Sabbath elation gone to?

"One must always go on advancing; that is the principal thing," continued his father. "While I was speaking to the Doctor, I recollected my promise; and Silva said he could recommend such a

Latin master to me, that half Europe could not show his equal."

Baruch and his father went together to the physician.

"I have been expecting you for a long time," he said, "and Magister Nigritius expected me to come to him this morning."

The praise that Baruch now received personally from the physician was doubly painful to him; he felt so unworthy of it since his inner experiences and the day's events in the school.

What if it were a foreordained necessity that he should become an apostate? Baruch trembled now at the fulfilment of his ardently desired wish.

If apostasy were a necessity, who could oppose it?

"I have felt a disinclination," said his father, as the three proceeded together to the house, "to my son's learning Latin, and still more to letting him learn it from a Christian. I once heard the saying in the Talmud, 'Cursed is he who allows his son to study the learning of the Greeks.' Nothing else turned Acosta's head; if in all his days he had never seen Latin or Greek, I could swear he might now be living among us in peace of mind, honor and happiness."

"With all respect for your words, my dear Benjamin," said the Doctor, "you are a skilful merchant, and know how and when to effect a sale of



the rose-wood and cinnamon the East India Company bring you, but in this case you must let others teach you. I cannot believe that you too are one of those who forget their own youth and would bring the darkness of the Poles down on us. For the respect and honor which we enjoy (here the Doctor's looks partook of pride), we have only to thank the fact that in secular learning we can speak a word as well as the others. It is another thing whether to learn it from a Christian or not. But your Baruch is so familiar with the Bible and the Talmud, that against any evidence they might adduce from the Bible for the Messiahship of Jesus, he could easily find counter-evidence; and it is generally the pious Christians who would leave every one to his own faith: the freethinkers among the Christians are much more to be feared; they could ruin our youths; for he who would deny the foundations of all religion—he is the true betrayer. True learning, however, leads back again to faith."

The learned Doctor enlarged yet more on his theme; for he not only wanted to show off his knowledge of theological and philosophical learning, rare indeed in a physician, but wished to have his rude beginning forgotten. He had not finished when he entered the house of Magister Nigrītius, and as he somewhat noisily mounted the five steps, he gave his companions regulations how to behave to the man whom they visited. They at last reached



a landing, whose floor showed many cracks. The Doctor opened the door: a little man with a greenish-yellow complexion, and a neutral-tinted, ink-spotted dressing-gown, sprang up to meet him, stumbling over some folios that lay on the floor.

“*Eureka carissime amice!*” \* cried the Magister. “*Marsi*, not *Mauri*, is the reading. Look, Horace wishes to derive the descent of Augustus from the God of War, and says:

‘*Quem juvat clamor, galeaque leves,  
Acer et Mauri peditis cruendum  
Vultus in hostem.*’ †

But the Moors are neither warlike nor brave. Here is a passage in Hirtius on the African war, where less than thirty Gauls drove two thousand Moorish cavalry from their position; and the Moors had no infantry. Also the Moors were their enemies then, and the conquered foe over whom Mars rejoices was a Roman—how stupid and unpatriotic! So I read it *Marsi*, and the Marsian infantry were the boldest among the Italians, of which there are many proofs in Strabo, Appian, and Vergil, and two passages in Horace show the same. You see, with this conjecture alone I can so fill the mouth of that boaster, Kaspar Barläus, that he will have

\* Found, my worthy friend!

† The din of battle and the glittering helms delight, and the Moorish foot-soldiers furious look at the bleeding enemy.

had enough for his life. Ah, my dear Doctor, how lucky I am to have a man to whom I can tell all this, and who knows how to value such a discovery! Ever since this morning I have been waiting impatiently for you. I cannot understand now how they could have thought for so long that the most refined of Romans would have praised the stupid Moors. Sit down, my dear Doctor."

The Magister placed some open books that lay on a chair carefully on the floor. He now first paid his respects to the two strangers, whom he had not hitherto appeared to notice. Baruch stared before him absently during the long commentary of the Magister; he pressed his lips thoughtfully together; it seemed to him as if to-day all the world conspired to remind him at every step of the Moorish origin of his mother.

"What do they want with me?" inquired the Magister irritably. The physician appeased him, and said they had a request to make. "Sit down here," the Magister said to the father, and straightened his arm-chair, covered with brown leather.

"You, young man, sit by me on the bed."

"Have you nearly finished the medicine? and how is your cough?" inquired the physician.

"*Optime.* Last night I coughed a long time in bed, and when I had extinguished the lamp, the letters still swam before my eyes; then it first struck me that the reading was *Marsi*. I cried out

for joy. For fear I might lose the glorious discovery in my sleep, I sprang out of bed; but if I had searched myself dead I should never have found the tinder-box. Look! there it is. So I wrote it on the floor in the moonlight there with chalk. I then went quietly to sleep, and woke early this morning in a perspiration; so the cough seems to have gone away."

"You must give up your former way of life," said the Doctor, "and in the coming spring leave your cell oftener, or else I will not answer for it; if that chest cough comes back, a fever of joy over a lucky guess may not sweat it away."

The Magister laughed in good-humored incredulity. The Doctor now brought forward his request, and Nigritius agreed to it, with the proviso that Silva must be answerable for it if the boy were not clever enough.

"How old are you?" he asked Baruch.

"Fifteen."

"And you cannot say your declensions?"

"No."

"Hum, hum!" grumbled the Magister. "*Ars longa, vita brevis*, says Hippocrates; at fifteen Hugo Grotius had already made his learned edition of Martianus Capella, translated into Latin Stevini's art of navigation, and so amplified the 'Phænomena' of Aratus that no one knew which wrote better Latin, Cicero or he. I myself, *ut at minora redeam*, had,

when I was of that age, already made such a *Carmen* that Vergil himself could not have pointed out a Germanism or a false quantity in it. Fifteen! But we will see: *diligentia est mater studiorum*—that is, you must be industrious.”

Baruch promised, and the Magister continued:

“You can come to me every day at this time, but you must not awaken me if I am asleep. You need not bring any books; I have everything here.”

When the physician had repeated his congratulations on the lucky guess, he left the house of the Magister with Baruch and his father.

“You know I wish my children to learn everything, I never spare in that; but I must not make myself out to be greater than I am. I am not a rich man, so I must know what the Magister requires. I cannot give too much for Baruch alone, but if I win my lawsuit I may be able to spend more on him; now, however, I must remember that I have two more children.” So spoke the father, and the physician burst into a loud laugh.

“What are you laughing at now?” he asked irritably.

“Nothing, except that you take the Magister for a merchant; why, if he had nothing to eat to-morrow, he would rather starve than ask a penny in pay for instruction. Like the Rabbis who think it a sacred task to instruct any one in the Bible and

Talmud, so does he with Greek and Latin. Shy as he is of his fellows, he holds all mankind alike dear to his heart without distinction; and timid as he looks when people are with him, he is bold, nay, overbold, against them when he has his pen in his hand, and his ever-ready companions in arms, his books, at his side. By means of his extraordinary memory he can any minute raise a whole host of witnesses. This Nigritius is a truly extraordinary man."

"It is a dreary life to live so much alone, not a soul near him, only books, books; I could not live like that," said Baruch.

"I believe you," answered the physician. "You see that is another unseen though incalculably valuable point of superiority in our religion; it is impossible that such hermit natures should arise within it. Unless some one has cut loose from all sacred duties,—which, God be praised, has never happened yet unpunished, and which would not be permitted, how could any one manage to live alone? To pray—three times a day in company with at least ten co-religionists, and to attend the synagogue without fail every Sabbath and fast-day, these are simple precepts which make a hermit's seclusion impossible. And such narrow pedantic natures, with their minute hair-splitting and small so-called love of order, which are so common in this country, you never meet among the Jews; that comes of their



quick southern blood." The theologizing physician would willingly have followed up this newly discovered idea, but the father's curiosity interrupted him with the question:

"Where does the Magister come from, and how does he keep himself?"

"He comes from Heidelberg, a German town on the Rhine;\* his name is Schwarz, but, like all the learned men of the day, he has Latinized it. He does not like to talk of his early life; but in an hour of sadness he once confided to me that in the war which has now lasted full thirty years his native town was plundered and laid in ashes by the Imperial troops. He was fortunate enough to save the manuscripts taken from the University library to Rome that belonged to him; he fled with them, and remained deserted here. He had not crossed the boundaries of his native town twice in his life; in Attica, or Latium, he knew every house and every road; but here he did not know his way out or in. He joined a company of exiles and came here, where he has now lived for six-and-twenty years. The Heidelberg Library bought back his manuscripts, which he had enriched with valuable comments. Besides, he undertakes corrections for Gerhard Vossius, his countryman, and for others. The best emendations in the ancient classics are his, and no one knows them to be so; but that does not trouble him. It

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\* So in the original; it is on the Neckar.—*Transl. note.*



verges on the incredible how little his requirements are; study as much as he will, he is the same one day as another, always gay and pleasant; but he knows nothing of the world. He is long past sixty, but he is as inexperienced as a child of ten years old; he can tell you easily enough how many *sesterces* Crassus had for his fortune; but if he possessed twenty stivers, and had to count them, he would not know what to do or say about it. It is well for him that he is in such an honest house; Klaas Ufmsand and his wife, good Gertrui, take care of everything for him. I tell you all this, Baruch, that you may never make fun of him, even if he is rather queer; he cannot bear ridicule. Even if he often thrashes empty straw, he is so thoroughly learned, and you can learn so much from him, that you must always treat him with respect."

"Yes, yes," said his father, "if you do not learn Latin with him, you never will learn it."

From this time forth Baruch went to the Magister every day. He soon found out that he was not the man to introduce him to the famous temple of classical antiquity, but remembering his father's threat, he said nothing about the disappointment of his expectations.

He was obliged to gnaw at the hard shell of the rudiments of Latin grammar, while longing so earnestly to get at the nourishing kernel. Not even

the intellectual gymnastics of his Talmud studies were in these empty forms, which merely required impressing on the memory. A student like Baruch required special treatment. A mind that had already exercised itself on the highest intellectual questions was far beyond the degree of mere receptiveness; and only what he could work out for himself he truly understood. His teacher tried to satisfy Baruch's impatience with the assurance that—

“It is only when all the forms are in the head that a man can wander *inoffenso pede* in the paths of classic learning.”

Baruch by degrees learned his teacher's strange ways, and learned to respect and to imitate them. Just this steady but often painfully measured progress, which admitted of no haste, still less allowed for digressions, even this hard discipline pleased him after the showy hair-splitting of the Talmud-school. He constrained himself to follow this regulated pace, and his master appreciated the devotion, and found his scholar win on his affections, as he rejoiced daily more and more to find a sympathetic mind near him. He promised his pupil to leave him his Cicero “On the Greatest Good and the Greatest Evil,” which he had enriched with valuable marginal notes, as a legacy.

One day when Baruch came to his tutor's house he received him with unusual warmth, and told

him that he had that day deciphered one of the most difficult passages in Cicero's "Orator." The commentators and the later philologists had always given the easier reading, which would naturally be more convenient; but it was the sacred duty of all true philologists to regard the more difficult reading—just because it was the more difficult, and not so easily understood by every one—as the correct and original.

"That is strange," said Baruch; "it seems to me as though, if I were crossing a barley field, and saw some sheaves lying there, I must say, Ay, those are oat sheaves that have been brought from another field, for to allow they were barley sheaves would not evince skill."

Magister Nigritius started; this application of Talmudistic sophistry to a foreign, if not wholly unkindred subject, disgusted him. He assured Baruch that the transcriber of a difficult passage would of course be willing to find an easier turn for it; it was therefore his duty, if there were sense in the more difficult reading, to prefer it.

Baruch was satisfied by this representation: the acuteness of reasoning that thereby came into play attracted him, but still unsatisfied he felt the longing for that new world of serene beauty which should have been opened to him. The increasing chest disease of the Magister, and the secret dissatisfaction between him and Baruch, made the in-

struction henceforward irregular and little profitable.

At this time Rabbi Saul began the tractate *Eruvin* with his scholars, and to facilitate the solution of the geometrical problems there given, he undertook a thorough course of mathematics according to the Hebrew translation of Euclid. The restless intellect of Baruch found sufficient employment therein, and he also devoted himself again with undivided zeal to the study of the Talmud. He hoped thus to re-find his former peace. His immediate pleasure in this study had grown less, and yet he still aspired with a perfectly ravenous craving towards the fuller satisfaction of his longing for knowledge. He did not tell any one his opinion, nor confide in any one. For it is inherent in the nature of a young growing human being, as it is in every growth of nature in general, that, by means of its power of attraction, its absorption far exceeds its loss by rejection; thus its vital principle grows and ripens into its destined form. In quietude as of sleep the mind of the youth awoke to the surprise of his own consciousness, and the insight of others.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE TREATY OF PEACE.

HONEST Mynheer Dodimus de Vries conscientiously entered the date 24th October, 1648, in conscientious clerkly style in his ledger, and wrote underneath how much wool, saffron, and ginger had arrived, and how much cheese, sugar, and tea he had that day despatched. Afternoon tea was delicious, and Mynheer de Vries told his dear spouse that he had still seven hundredweight and a half of that sort in his warehouse that would be worth more every day, for the celebrated Dr. Beverocius had written a treatise wherein he plainly proved that tea was a preservative from all maladies, and the East India Company had had this treatise printed and circulated at their own expense. Hereupon he slept softly and smiled in his dreams like a child, but had no notion of the sweet surprise Mevrouw de Vries was preparing for him. Of the tulip bulbs of the rarest sorts and varied sizes and species which she cultivated in her garden she built a pyramid on the writing table opposite the sleeper, so that when the happy man awoke his eyes were met by the ingenious edifice. He embraced his stout better-half heartily, and went



gayly and happily to his counting-house. It was a lucky day, a day like all others, except for the extra pleasure of the tulip pyramid. What in the world could happen more than usual?

Three gorgeously dressed heralds rode at a sharp trot with sound of trumpets through the streets of Amsterdam, without drawing rein until they reached the Town Hall. The hammers stopped in the smithies, the weaver's shuttle hung on the loom, the tradesman wiped his pen, the banker straightened his spectacles on his nose, locked his black box, and pulled a second time at the padlock to make sure that it was safely locked. Our Mynheer de Vries laid the blotting-paper thoughtfully on the freshly written page, closed his ledger, and locked it in the desk; then Mevrouw brought him his wig and gold-headed cane.

"My love, have you noticed nothing strange about me? I am expecting all day long that something extraordinary is going to happen to the world." So said Mynheer de Vries, and he took his son Simon by the hand and went to the Town Hall to hear the news which he had anticipated.

But it was not so quiet in the houses of the town councillors; every hand and every foot therein was set in motion to bring the robes and clothe the stately person of the master; nothing would set well in the hurry, and the stern old councillor scolded over his wife's want of order, and tried to put



things into a form worthy of his dignity on the way. It required all his importance to force his way to the entrance of the Town Hall through the crowd which had assembled there. Artisans with their aprons still tied on and their bare, sinewy arms folded; clerks with their pens behind their ears, and ink on their fingers; porters who had set down their loads and seated themselves thereon; soldiers, idlers, women and children, all stood huddled together, and exchanged conjectures on the arrivals. One loitering dandy praised the light trot of the horses and the fine work on the robes of the heralds; they fitted as if grown to them, and must have been made either in Madrid or Paris, civilization was as yet too backward in this country; no Amsterdam tailor knew how to give a waistcoat such an undeniable cut. An apple-woman admired to her neighbor the rich gold embroidery, and the breadth and brilliancy of the herald's ribbons, and an apprentice remarked to his companion that those must be Utrecht ribbons, as they had some in the warehouse which they sold at four and a half stivers the yard to gain five and twenty per cent. On the right hand corner of the Town Hall a tall lean figure had planted himself, his legs carelessly crossed as he whistled a tune.

"A good thing you are here, Flyn's," shouted several porters. "You can tell us for certain what the golden birds that have flown up there have in

their beaks; you have shaved the chins of more than ten town councillors to-day; you ought to know what is going on in the United Netherlands. Have we captured a silver fleet or something of that sort? The devil! You have a face like a mynheer on the pier when he hears his ship has foundered." They all shouted together, and the barber tried to get away so that his dignified appearance might check their impertinence.

"Holla! stop! that won't do," they cried. "In the Thunderbolt there with a full glass of gin you may know everything as well or better than the Grand Pensioner himself, and you can tell us all about it there; now, brother, show us how much you know, and if any one says you lie we will tan his hide for him till he can't see or hear."

Their clenched fists showed that they meant to keep their promise, but Flyn's answered none the more, and tried to get away from his evidently unpleasant surroundings.

"Let him alone," said one; "the chin scraper has always shaved us over a spoon.\* Why should he be there if he knew any more than we do. He must wait as well as we till they throw us something down."

"Ha, ha!" they all laughed; "good, but you will have to wait too, you see."

"I only wait," said Flyn's, "to amuse myself by

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\* Taken us in.

seeing you march off with the wind in your ears. You herring-hearts, you think they ought to grease your dirty mouths with the news boiling hot. Go to! Eat your dinners, there is nothing here for such lubbers as you. Off with you; if I did not know my own place I should despise myself for having so much in common with you. That comes of being too good, and not keeping one's proper position continually before one's eyes. You have seen too much of me."

"Nay, nay, we did not mean that; you must not go away angry," they all cried. "If the little rat-catcher says a word against you we will stop his mouth so that it will bulge like a woolsack that has lost its hoop. Don't be cross, and tell us all about it; you surely know."

Thus invited and flattered he fell back into his former easy position, and began:

"Do you remember what I said when we went home yesterday evening, and saw fiery hosts fighting in the eastern heavens? You will soon see what will come of it. I did not forget it. When I went early this morning to rich Van Kampen, who lives near the Oude Kerk, to shave him, he made a face like a cat in thunder; he is always close, nothing to be got out of him; but I laid my plans and learned from him without his knowing it that the war is going well at last. As for the Spaniard, we have done with him long ago; he can say no more.

But, my brethren, you will stare your eyes out with astonishment, and we may pave a whole country with men's heads. The Turk, as I said a short time ago, won't rest, and would like to give Austria a slap. But look! There that puffy-cheeked master rope-maker, Reuwerz, is on a cask, and babbles something to the monkey-faced creatures that stand round him. That lot are unendurable. Since the rope-maker, Michel Ruyter, has become a hero of the sea every one thinks if he can twist a cable of tow he must have the making of an admiral in him. Every apprentice who turns a windlass thinks we have to thank him for the hundred ships of war and the hundred merchantmen we could send to sea any day; and a boy who has not a hair in front of his ears babbles about freedom and rights. But there is no God in Heaven if things do not change again soon. Then men of standing and education were something; my father was first valet—"

"Ay, there you warm to the old story again; we have heard that a hundred times, and have always told you we will have none of the Orange rule. Stadtholders they may be, we have nothing to say against that, but under their rule we might starve, and now we have enough to eat if we don't sit with our hands in our laps."

So said Maessen Blutzaufer, who spoke for his comrades, and before the barber could look round he was deserted by his audience.

“Hurrah for the United Provinces!” shouted one of the crowd, and, as if by electricity, all the assembly roared, “Hurrah for the United Provinces!” till the window-panes clattered with the shout. When silence ensued again, they all pressed round the master rope-maker who was still speaking.

“Brethren!” he cried, “obedience is the first duty of true citizens, obedience to the laws, and respect and regard for governors, whom we no longer receive from foreign tyrants, but whom we elect from among ourselves. I have heard many among you grumble that free citizens of the Republic are made to wait down here, while those above sit behind locked doors, and keep for themselves the state secrets which belong to us all, one as much as another. You all know, brethren, I love freedom as much as any one. Without thinking twice I would hang my best halter round the neck of my own son if I heard that he was a traitor to freedom, or might become one. I hate those court flatterers, who would make themselves out better than we, as I hate Old Nick. So you may trust me that I mean well by you when I persuade you to be quiet. There may be cases in which the fathers of the Republic hold it better not to trumpet the news to every wind. Think for yourselves; there might be traitors among us!”

“Down with traitors! Hurrah for freedom!” burst from the crowd in one enthusiastic shout.



“Therefore, brethren,” continued the orator, “whatever may come, war or peace, on water or on land, we have the handle in our own hands, and we will not let it be wrenched out. We have won our freedom, we can protect it.”

The cry of “Hurrah for Hooft! Hurrah for the States General!” here interrupted the orator, for on the balcony of the Town Hall appeared old Drost Hooft, and with him the town councillors, as many as the balcony would hold. Attentive silence reigned while Drost thanked them and began:

“Brother citizens, a slight accident has prevented me from sooner imparting the news which must fill the heart of every one with joy and thankfulness. Yesterday the thirty years of the horrors of war, and the seven years’ peace conference at last came to an end. Honorable and favorable conditions for the United Provinces are in the treaty, to which all the powers of Europe have sworn. Above all, Spain, with the approval of all Europe, has acknowledged the perfect independence of our Republic. It is merely a point of honor, nothing more, for we have not waited for them to present us with our freedom; we have won it with the help of God and our own good swords. Our rightful conquests in Brabant, Flanders and Limburg, the right to close the Scheld at will, and other privileges remain to us. Rejoice and thank God, for it is he



who decrees man to leave the sword in the sheath, that peace may be between Christian and Christian. Pray to him that he may preserve the peace. Love God, and guard our liberties !”

“ Hurrah for freedom !” echoed and re-echoed the cheers of the dispersing crowd through every street, till at last it was lost in the clang of the bells which spread the news of the peace through the air.

It was a glorious, impressive sight to see the life of a people as it can only spring from the consciousness of a happily won and gladly enjoyed peace. Many indeed could not accustom themselves to the thought that the peace really existed, as one who is freed from a heavy burden still feels its pressure, even when he has long been relieved from it.

The pious were the first to accustom themselves to the new state of affairs, for they had found it plainly revealed in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelations of St. John that this year, whose number, divided and added, gave the sacred numbers twelve and seven, must be a year of peace and blessedness; and they went home, and called their children and their household together, and said:

“ Watch and pray, for the Millennium, the reign of the Lord has arrived; the promise will be fulfilled, and the Lord will enter into his glory.”

Those, however, who had not so much faith

trusted in the seven seals and the signatures of the European powers, and were content therewith.

As Mynheer de Vries went home he said to his son Simon, "Have you given your full attention? Such a day as this, please God, you will never see in your life again." But any one a little way off would not have found out from his walk and bearing that Mynheer de Vries had thus explained to his son that greatest of benefits—a citizen's freedom. He spoke with such quiet thoughtfulness, so devoid of all outward excitement, evincing that immovable tenacity of the Netherlanders, who, even where their passions were concerned, still held to the national ideal, the "makklyk," the comfortable. At home Mynheer Dodimus embraced his beloved wife in an ecstasy of joy.

"See, my dear," he said, pointing to the tulip bulbs, "they can grow on peaceful ground, and my tea has risen a third in price, for the soldiers who are now coming home have not drunk tea for so long that they will enjoy it all the more."

He sat down to table quietly and in silence, and endeavored to control the extraordinary excitement which had disturbed him during the day. That evening he drank half a glass more than his usual quantity; he did not speak a word at table, and before tea came in he slept in peace.

It is a good thing that the house of the De Vries is far from the Thunderbolt ale-house. The shouts

and cheers that echoed from there would certainly have awakened the good man from his slumbers. There sat the whole gang of porters, and made themselves happy with gin. The popular "Het daghet uyt den Osten" was sung to an end, and Maessen Blutzaufer had struck up "Wilhelmus van Nassau," when he was interrupted by a tremendous bawling.

"Hold! here comes Judas the archknave, the false prophet; stone him, crucify him, drown him!" they all shouted together as Flyns entered.

"Now answer for it, why did you take us in this morning?" cried one. Flyns stood his ground and smiled condescendingly. His father had not been first valet to Prince Maurice of Nassau for nothing; he had inherited so much of diplomatic talent from him. He let the revellers stop blustering.

"Are you ready?" he asked quietly. "You don't understand a joke; I only wanted to make you look foolish."

"But that is lying and rascally cheating," cried the little man.

"Lie down, you rat-catcher," retorted Flyns; "if you bark like that again I will grind your crooked bones to meal, and sell it for rat-poison."

"Be quiet, be quiet, no disputes, we must have peace everywhere. Give him your hand," they all cried, and Flyns sat down with his friends.

"So here we sit," said Maessen Blutzaufer, "and

ten horses shall not drag me from my seat. And if the Emperor of Japan came, dressed like the one in the East India House, and said, 'Take me that gold chest two houses farther and you shall earn a thousand stivers,' I should say, 'Emperor, take a glass; to-day I cannot serve you; sit down with us here; we are all emperors as good as you;' and if the Grand Pensioner himself sent for you, you should not move from this spot, Flyns. No beard shall come to harm to-day; even the beards shall have peace."

"You all rejoice over the peace," said Flyns, "and you don't know what name the child has."

"Well, what is it called?"

"The everlasting peace."

"Vivat! Hurrah for the everlasting peace!" they all cried, and emptied their glasses to the dregs. Flyns prophesied the return of the jolly times of Jacob van Artevelde in Ghent, and told them that in those old times, by wise management and extensive trade connection, men need only work two days a week, and might sit in the ale-house all the rest. It was a tempting bait, and each one had his own ideal of how to enjoy it. Maessen Blutzaufer alone would hear nothing of it, and asserted that it would be less godless to have no Sunday at all than five a week. The jolly company revelled far into the night, and then stumbled singing and cheering home,

Everywhere joy and merrymaking prevailed, in church and tavern as well as in the family circle, for peace was spread over the whole of Christendom. Peace to all religions. Peace in heaven, and peace on earth.

Only on the town-wall one soul mourned over vanished peace, that no treaty made by earthly potentates could restore, for the covenant of Heaven, the Law of Moses lay torn before him. In the library of the School of the Crown of the Law Baruch Spinoza sat alone. Before him was Ebn Esra's Commentary on the five Books of Moses, of the difficulties and obscurities of which study his teacher had often warned him. There were two passages the solution of which had long occupied him. On the history of the waters of strife (Numbers xxix.) that were drawn from the rock he found this commentary: "I will here point out what appears to me to be the right explanation. Understand, if the part knows the whole he comprehends it, and thereby can do miracles." The passage (Numbers xiii.) "I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord," he explains thus: "The creature cannot alter the work of the Creator or his law; the mystery is, a part cannot alter the other part, but only the law of the whole can alter that of a part. I can penetrate this mystery no further for it is deep; at any rate the she-ass spoke. When you have found out the secret of the angels



of Abraham and of Jacob you will penetrate the truth of this."

The passage where it says, "When you understand the secret of the twelve," etc. Baruch understood more easily. A kindred spirit here attracted him; he recognized the caution and diligent veiling, and boldly and freely gave this result, that independent reason and traditional faith can only be reconciled by mutual compulsion. It was made clear to him that not the whole of the contents of the Holy Scriptures were written by inspired men; the glory had vanished; the whole was the work of man. How could profane hands in later ages meddle in the writings of God? Who was the author of the Bible? who its commentator? Dare any one require an answer to this question, and who could give it? Who?

Baruch read the passage commenting on Genesis xii. 6. which the prudent Spaniard finishes with these words, "And whoever has penetrated this mystery, let him keep silence." "Yes, I will keep silence," said Baruch to himself. Buried in thought he recollected another assertion of Ebn Esra's, that there is but one substance, and that is God, and that God is the first category of the ten categories of Aristotle, as the number one is the root of all numbers; and marvellous was the explanation to the almost incomprehensible verse, Job xxiii. 13. "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him?"



The word *in*, Ebn Esra explains, appears superfluous here, but is not so indeed; "I cannot explain it, for herein lies a great secret."

What was the use of these enigmatical directions? What was the use of explaining and searching into one word, one particle, if it were nothing more than the often defective and involved expression of a mere man? Baruch shut the book quickly and turned over the leaves of another, for he heard steps approaching the library. Chisdai Astruk and Ephraim Cardoso entered. Chisdai held out his perpetually damp, lobster-red hand of friendship to Baruch, and looked at the book to see what he was reading. Chisdai had rather a tall figure, a little bowed, and long black eyebrows, whose ends encroached on his forehead; he always screwed them together so that the hair stood out like bristles; his not unhandsome but full forehead was nearly hidden by his untidy long black hair; the expression of his brown eyes was not recognizable on account of his large round spectacles. The wearing of these had a special signification, for the orthodox Jews as well as Christians forbade the practice as an unseemly innovation. What ground the Christians took on the question we cannot tell; the Jews probably had no other but the fact that Joshua and Caleb wore no spectacles, and yet had seen everything distinctly. While Chisdai excused himself to the orthodox on the score of short-sight, he

nevertheless liked to please the more enlightened, whose number was not small in the Amsterdam congregation, by this adoption of a novelty, and appear as a young man of advanced cultivation. In the heat of controversy he was continually obliged to put these significant instruments in their right place, for, indeed, his nose did not seem to be made for these evidences of western civilization; they continually slipped over the bridge, from whence his nose bent to a sharp point like a beak. His wide mouth always formed a half smile, for Chisdai was always mindful of the precept of the Talmudist, that no pious Jew must laugh outright as long as the Holy City of Jerusalem is laid waste, that it may be fulfilled as it is written, Ps. cxxvi. 1, 2, "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream; then was our mouth filled with laughter." A strange contrast to the rest of Chisdai's face, distorted by an eternal grimace, was the well-cut rounded chin on which the long hair began to darken, for he was four years older than Baruch. He never shaved this beard. Besides the appointed fast-days he fasted every Monday and Thursday, and every Friday he dipped nine times in fresh well water, which nevertheless did not lessen the unattractive nature of his appearance. Wherever he went or stayed he hummed inaudibly an extract from the Mishna, or a synagogue melody, and

when he sat he moved his crossed legs in palsied jerks. When Chisdai was seated he said to Baruch:

"You are well met just now, you shall be arbitrator between me and Ephraim; but promise not to give half answers as you usually do, and do not be so close; I do not see why you should be. Are we not brethren?"

"In what am I so close?" inquired Baruch.

"I will not explain now, we will leave that for another time. So that you may be quite impartial I will not tell you which is which of our views. But to speak out, Do you believe in the existence of angels?"

"That is another strange question," answered Baruch.

"Now, to put it another way," continued the other, "must we believe in the existence of angels?"

"That is the same question. But are we not Jews? Must we not believe in the Bible, and in all the goodly rows of books behind those wire doors?"

"But what is there in the Bible about the state of angels?"

"You know as well as I do," answered Baruch.

"But what does the Bible say about the state of angels? Are they material or immaterial?"

"You have a whole list of examples," answered Baruch, "and may choose at will. Abraham, Ha-

gar and Lot, Isaac, Abimelech and Jacob, angels appeared to them all. They first set a fresh-killed calf and fresh cakes before them; with Jacob one wrestled the whole night long, and at last sprained his right thigh, for which reason to this day we are not allowed to eat the hinder part of a slain beast. Have you not enough of angels? If you wish for yet more material ones, an angel appeared to Balaam, and the ass saw him first; an angel appeared to Joshua with a drawn sword; an angel appeared twice to Samson's mother, after which she bore her godless giant child. To Samuel and David angels appeared everywhere. Do you want a whole court of angels? In the very first chapter of Hezekiah there is a great array of them. I once heard the late Acosta say that court angels must have been much more fortunate than our present courtiers, for they had in fact four wings, four hands, and, what is better still, four faces; a man's, a lion's, an ox's, and an eagle's face, and wherever they went they followed straight the face that best pleased them. If you want immaterial angels, it is written (Ps. civ. 4) 'Who maketh his angels spirits.'

"Do you not believe in bad angels?" asked Chisdai.

"Do you believe, and do you believe! You ought to ask what is written, and, as far as I know our Bible, there is nothing in it about such a Satan or devil as the Christians believe in. The history

of Job, according to the Talmud, is merely a poem. To God everything is good; it is only to us men that many things appear bad, as it stands in our glorious Isaiah (xlv. 6, 7), 'I am the Lord and there is none else; I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil!'"

"But can there not be bad angels?"

"No; the distinctive mark of an angel is that he is a mere tool of God without free will. Satan is said to be a fallen angel who rebelled against God; but that could never happen if God did not rebel against himself."

"In the Midrasch the origin of bad angels is very well explained," said Ephraim, who had till then listened in silence. "Whenever an angel wished to become visible on earth he must imbibe a material essence, and none could be permitted to stay longer on earth than seven days. Once several exceeded this limit, and through their lengthened sojourn they had imbibed so much material essence that, thus overweighted, they could not rise to heaven. Such is the origin of the devil by which Genesis vi. 2 is explained."

"That may be very fine," said Baruch, "but is it true? How could an angel overstep the laws of his being?"

"So you do not believe in the existence of bad angels?" put in Chisdai.

"There you are again with your 'Do you be-



lievè !” answered Baruch angrily. “I know as well as you do that the daily Kadish prayer in the synagogue is repeated in Chaldaic because the bad angels cannot understand the idiom, and because no contrary petition can prevail against it with God; I know as well as you that by the Shophar\* trumpet on New Year’s day Satan is confounded, and a good year for Israel obtained.”

Ephraim then expounded the view taken by the great and learned Maimonides, who explained away angelic appearances as mere prophetic visions.

“That borders on heresy ! that is abominable !” cried Chisdai.

“Agreed,” responded Baruch, with an odd smile. “It is absurd, useless babble if Maimonides twists his own inventions out of the Scriptures and explains supernatural revelations away as dreams. That is half-heartedness. He had not the courage to say ‘Thus the Scripture teaches and thus reasons.’” Baruch here stopped; he saw how far he had let himself be led on. He read for awhile in a book, and soon after left the room.

“There he goes,” said Chisdai to Ephraim, “he will be a second Acosta.”

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\* A kind of horn upon which no melody is played, only a tremolo of whole tones and semitones; probably an obsolete war note.



“You have tried so ingeniously to lead him on to bad speeches,” responded Ephraim; “let him go his own way.”

“No,” said Chisdai, and continued in the words of the Talmud, “In religious matters each Israelite has to answer for the other. On me, on thee, and on us all lies the burden of sin which he commits.” He then left the room muttering to himself.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE CABBALIST.

AT dusk Baruch and Miriam sat together, while old Chaje told them a marvellous story.

“Do you know that our servant for the Sabbath, old Elsje, came to a terrible end this night? I see green and yellow before my eyes whenever I think of it, and of what might have happened to us all, and I have sat with her for hours by this fireside. In old times, though, we used to hear of far more wonderful things; my mother often used to tell me how the synagogue in Warsaw was on fire once, and the fire had nearly reached the windows, but the Rabbi, who was a great Baal Shem,\* threw a parchment on which he had written some secret words into the flame, and it went out like a puffed-out candle. Thank God! there are some pious men left who can control the Schedim.” †

“You talk such things that no one can tell what you mean,” said Miriam, and Chaje replied:

“I heard the whole story at the butcher’s from black Guḏul; her sister is servant in the house of the pious Rabbi Isaak Aboab. What a sweet child

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\* Exorcist.

† Demon.

Rabbi Aboab's Sara was ! I was always afraid she would be bewitched, and nearly a year ago her face went as black as a coal, and instead of speaking clearly and pleasantly, she shrieked out such words as one never heard in this world from a girl of fifteen, and wrung her hands as if she had the gout. Every one said she was bewitched and had a spirit. No doctor or apothecary could do any good. Rabbi Isaak wept and prayed the whole night long, so that he might have softened a stone in the wall. Since the misfortune befell him he has fasted from one Sabbath to another; he only takes soup and a couple of figs every night. Yesterday he went to the Mikwe,\* and dipped nine times; when he went home he put on his winding sheet, had his chair brought from the synagogue, and his daughter placed in it; four men had to carry her and bind her in it, the spirit struggled so. When all the people had gone out he fastened Psalm cxxx. to all the doors and windows in the house, and forbade them to admit any one that night, however they might beg and pray; no one must attempt to open a door or window on pain of death. God forbid ! Then he built up sacred books round the chair as high as Sara, and took a clean un-notched slaughtering-knife, and went nine times round Sara with it; then, as she had a loud

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\* Bath for purification.

rattling in her throat, he put a parchment with some holy words on it on her heart, and on the left side of the chair he put the slaughtering-knife. When all this was done he opened the holy chest in the corner, and took the Thora in his left hand while he opened a window with the other. Then he laid the Thora quickly on the table on which six black wax-lights burned, and as he unrolled the Thora he bent over it, threw himself on his knees, and called on the name of God and all angels so that all who heard him felt their blood run cold. Then he took the Shophar, and blew it as on New Year's Day, till they thought the Messiah was coming. Twelve o'clock had hardly struck when there came a knocking at the door, as if a hundred men were battering it with clubs.

“‘Open, open, pray, I entreat you, open—have mercy—I shall die—open, it is Elsje, it is I, open!’

“So the voice cried outside, and the spirit in Sara began to scream again, so that you could hear it ten houses off. No one attempted to open it. Rabbi Aboab still went on praying and screaming, and calling on God and the angels till he had no voice left. At last all was still outside, and Sara too was quiet, and when they looked at her a black liquid like ink was pouring out of her right ear on to the knife. It was quite clean before, but there was a drop of blood as well on it now.

“‘Thank God!’ said Rabbi Aboab; ‘my child is saved.’

“They took Sara to bed, and this morning she got up as fresh and well and prettier than ever; she knew nothing about it all, but thought she had slept a long time. Elsje came home last night about twelve o’clock with her mouth foaming, and as she took hold of the lock of her room door she fell down dead. You may believe it all, for black Gudul’s sister looked through the keyhole of Rabbi Aboab’s door. God is great to have left such men still among us; but just imagine, children, who would have thought that Elsje was such a cursed witch? Who knows how many children she may have bewitched? And the ingratitude of it! She might have starved if she had not earned a stiver or two from the Jews as Sabbath servant. Many a good bit have I got for her. I am afraid to be two minutes alone in the kitchen; I always expect Elsje to come down the chimney in the form of a black cat, or like a witch with fiery eyes, snakes on her head, and a broomstick in her bony hand. Ugh! I should die of fright.”

Suddenly there was a tremendous thud on the ceiling of the room so that the house shook; clamor and distant wailing were heard; the old woman screamed “Shema Israel!” Miriam clutched her brother’s hand. All stood still to listen to the distant wailing.

“Come and bring a light,” said Baruch rising. “We must see what is there.” Chaje, with trembling hands, put a candle in the lantern, and, upon her urgent entreaties, Baruch was obliged to take his Thephillin\* in his hand that no evil thing might have power over them. Miriam went with him, for she was afraid to be left in the room alone, and even Baruch could not repress a slight shudder as he mounted the stairs to the granary. When they arrived there they found a chest, which had long hobbled on three legs, overthrown. “So that was it,” said Baruch laughing; a black cat limped from behind the chest, and disappeared through the window in the roof.

“Have mercy on our sins, it is Elsje!” screamed old Chaje, and let the lantern fall in her fright. The three remained in the dark, and speedily left the place that appeared so haunted. Chaje and Miriam held on to Baruch’s coat-tails as they stumbled down the stairs.

Baruch regarded this little event in his home life in its true light, but the enigmatical incantations of Rabbi Aboab strengthened his determination to endeavor by all means to penetrate the mysteries of the black art. The Cabbala, of which every one spoke in wonder and with bated breath, might contain the solution of his doubts and questions; the

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\* Amulet inscribed with texts.



initiated might form a community of the wise. The next day, Thursday, he went to Rabbi Aboab. He was a man in what is called the prime of life, of stalwart figure; his many fasts had not much injured him, for he looked in excellent condition; his round face and ruddy cheeks, his black beard falling to his breast, might have been called handsome, and were only disfigured by a large wart over his left eye, which wagged merrily when he spoke, and above all when he laughed.

Baruch was cordially received, but when he brought forward his request the Rabbi replied roundly:

“No, that cannot be; do you not know that Rabbi Salomo ben Adereth has forbidden under penalty of excommunication that any one should be introduced to the study of the Cabbala before his twenty-fifth year?”

Baruch warmly entreated him.

“Do you know too,” the Rabbi continued, “that if you have—God forbid it!—the slightest worldly motive in the study of the Cabbala; if merely an incongruous thought mixes therein, your own life and the lives of all belonging to you are in some inexplicable danger? Can you trust yourself? Dare you face the risk? Will you?”

“I will,” answered Baruch in a firm voice.

Without another word the Rabbi took Baruch's left hand in his, and studied the fine lines marked

on the palm; then he pushed his hat back from his brow, and studied the lines of his face for awhile. Then he thoughtfully paced the room; firmly and mildly he did his utmost to dissuade Baruch from his purpose. Baruch was almost moved to tears, but, with a trembling voice, he still reiterated his firm determination without irresolution. "Well, so be it," said the Rabbi at last. "I am afraid you will only endanger yourself and perish, but I will be your leader. God will lead me in the way of truth. Come to me to-night after evening service."

The synagogue keeper Elasar Merimon could not repress his astonishment when he saw the youth coming with the Rabbi to the Mikwe.

"Peace be with you, Rabbi Baruch," he said, and grinned curiously.

The Rabbi commanded him to say nothing to any one of Baruch's presence there, and to go away himself as he did not need him that day. He took the key and lantern, and opened the tower-like edifice. The dull light of the lantern illuminated but dimly the bare, dusky walls and wooden benches around; in the middle was a well-like hole that was the bath. The Rabbi muttered a prayer and undressed carefully, observing all the while the precepts from the "Book of Chastity" written above. He had not quite undressed when he seized the lantern, and with rapid strides descended the thirty

stone steps of the bath. "Out of the depths I cry unto thee, O Lord! He hears me afar off, O my God!" he cried with all his strength, and his voice echoed weirdly from the depths of the well. Baruch shuddered to hear in the quiet night a soul crying to God, as it were, from the depths of the earth, for redemption and resurrection. The Rabbi placed the lantern on the lowest step of the bath, and threw himself with a splash into the water. At this sign Baruch laid himself down at the edge of the well, and nine times, whenever the Rabbi raised his head from the water and again dived, he cried "Koscher" (pure) into the illuminated vault.

The Rabbi came out again half dressed and with his head covered; his long beard, still dripping, and his lank matted hair gave his usually homely face a wild appearance. He gave Baruch a little book in which a prayer was written; the names of the angels therein must not be pronounced by lip or tongue on pain of death, but only repeated in thought. Baruch trembled with fear as he descended the dark pit, his knees gave way, but he took courage, and sprang lightly into the water. The Rabbi then undertook the same service that Baruch had performed for him; he too called the word of purification nine times across the well.

Without another word they left the Mikwe.

When they entered the street, lighted by the pale rays of the moon, Rabbi Aboab stood suddenly still,

and shook his head as he gazed at the long shadow which imitated his movements; then, looking heavenwards, he repeated the text usually said on awakening:

“I thank thee, O living and eternal King! that through thy constant and great favor thou hast given me my soul again.” Baruch did not venture to ask the reason of these proceedings; probably Rabbi Aboab had not yet taught him the saying of the Cabbala: “Whoever on the ‘night of the sign’\* sees his full shadow in the moonlight will not die that year.”

Rabbi Isaak Loria saw his shadow headless that night, and he died the day before the year ended.

Rabbi Aboab was gay and good-humored that evening when Baruch supped with him. The novice took care to bestow a glance on the fair Sara, from whom the evil spirit had been driven, and who, while she served the meal, shyly stared at the pale youth whose fame had spread through the whole congregation.

Rabbi Aboab sat long at table, and it was late at night when he led Baruch into his study, and taking the Thora from the sacred chest, unrolled it at the place where stood the ten commandments.

Baruch then must lay his right hand thereon, and speak thus:

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\* About 27th September.

“I call on thee, God Almighty and Incomprehensible, who hast confided the secrets of thy existence to Adam, Enoch, Abraham, and Moses, who have handed them down even unto our day. Let thy Holy Spirit descend on me, and lead me, that I do not stumble in the way in which I would walk, and if ever I did violate or sin against Thy secrets may all the evils of fear overtake me that I tremble at my own shadow; may my tongue dry up, my entrails wither, my eyesight die out, my breath become poison that destroyeth my best beloved when they may approach me; may grass grow on the threshold of my father’s house because none enter therein, and as I am damned here, may all the torments of Gehinom overwhelm me to all eternity. Therefore, O Lord, lead me that I rest under the shadow of thy wings, and bask in the light of thy glory. Amen! Amen!”

A shudder thrilled through his whole being, his lips blanched as he spoke these words, and even while he spoke a voice seemed to cry in him, “Woe unto thee! thou hast violated them since thou darest to enter here. Return!” But there was no return possible, the worst was over, and from that day forth the Rabbi became more confidential to his scholar.

They sat down to the table and the lesson began; the mystic reason why the Holy Scriptures begin with the letter Beth was disclosed; each letter and



each stop, each phrase and each transposition therein had its own deep signification. As proof that a secret meaning lay hidden in the words of the Bible it was alleged that the Holy Scriptures related so many unimportant facts, as that (Genesis xix. 11) "Rachel and Jacob kissed," the detailed enumeration (Numbers viii.) of the contributions of the twelve princes of the tribes to the building of the tabernacle, and many similar passages. All this must have a hidden signification.

They were deeply engrossed in these discussions when the echoing chimes of the Zuyderkerk informed them of the midnight hour. The Rabbi rose, took off his shoes, strewed ashes on his head, and sat down on the ground beside the door-post, where a parchment on which was the Shema lay in a niche; he covered his face, and amid tears repeated the alphabetical confession of sins, then in a mournful voice sang Psalm cxxxvii.: "By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning—let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

He repeated the Lamentations of Jeremiah in the same position; then arose with the words, "Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion" (Isaiah lii. 2).



“I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night; ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence; and give him no rest, till he establish and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth” (Is. lxii. 6).

Baruch did everything like the Rabbi, but was ignorant of the hidden meaning of each word, gesture and tone. Teacher and pupil again seated themselves at the table, drew on their shoes, and studied until morning, when the hour for the synagogue service arrived. Thus they spent the watches of each Thursday night.

Baruch went through the Book of “The Secrets of God,” whose supposed author was Adam, and the Book of the Creation, whose author is said to be the Patriarch Abraham. Not only his whole mind, but his whole body was excited by these studies; he incessantly swayed himself about and exercised his body, for the Cabbala teaches there is nothing in the higher world that has not its counterpart in the microcosm; thus the 248 commandments of the Jewish religion correspond with the similar number of members of the human body, and all these must be active in and devoted to the sacred study. Baruch knew the names and powers of all the angels, and knew the formulas by which they are constrained to the service of man; but all this, like the solution of chemical and magic problems, had but little interest for him. The mystery of mys-

teries it was that he yearned for incessantly, and here the Cabbala taught that all physical and spiritual life was but an imitation of the original in heaven, and a chain of existence and action leading up to God. This is the heavenly ladder which God showed to the Patriarch Jacob in a dream, on which the powers of the created world as angels, after their spiritual emancipation or material concentration, mount and descend; the graduated ladder of all existing things rests on earth and reaches to heaven; there is the heavenly Jerusalem, there the temple, the model of the earthly one, there all is spiritual that on earth is bound up in matter. From the Hebrew word *Ruach* (soul) it is shown by the numbers which the letters give that, the same being found in the various Hebrew words for God, the soul must be a part of God. The Hebrew word for *Messiah* contains the same number as the Hebrew word for *Serpent*, in which image Satan seduced Eve; the Messiah will therefore bruise the head of the *Serpent*, and banish sin and death from the earth. To the Adam on earth corresponds a threefold Adam in heaven; thus are derived the three different expressions in the accounts of the creation of the first parents (Genesis i. 27); the original of the earthly Adam is the Adam Kadmon in heaven, the image of God, and his first born Son. There are four worlds, which are spiritual or material according to their

more or less remote emanation from God. The end of creation, however, is the law; only for this revelation was the world created, for, according to the singular division of the words we read in Jer. xxxiii. 25, "Thus saith the Lord, If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth."

What is the triumph of victory or the power to rule nations compared to this immediate spiritual intercourse!

Rabbi Aboab used his own Hebrew translation of the Spanish Book of Ereira as a guide to the oral law, which, according to the words and sense of the Cabbala, must ever remain unwritten, and only be passed on from mind to mind.

Here at last Baruch attained a higher hold by which he could swing himself onward. He strove to separate the inner kernel from the outward shell of grotesque and extraordinary observances, but he found with pain that these especially were represented as essentials; that general ideas do not suffice where the question is one of penetrating the actual, and solving the enigmas of the fate of men and nations, but must fall back on the strange suppositions of the doctrine of metempsychosis, and the powers of evil spirits, in which nature and her laws lose themselves in confusion and anarchy.

The Rabbi was rejoiced at the zeal of his scholar, but often reminded him that if any one would pen-

etrate the real depths of the Cabbalistic practices, he must put away from him all sensual desires, which were the work of Satan.

“On the sixth day,” he added, “woman, and with her all low inclinations, was created; therefore the Rabbis teach that men ought to marry at the age of three times six; you have reached that age exactly.” There is no doubt that the views and efforts of the Rabbi were raised above all things earthly, but this need not hinder him from thinking of a union between Baruch and Sara. The young Cabalist noticed nothing, even when the Rabbi once intentionally left him alone with the fair Sara.

The Rabbi once taught his pupil that Jesus of Nazareth also had been indoctrinated in the Cabbala by the sect of Essenes. The Rabbi never anticipated what he led to thereby.

Baruch had often already been irresistibly fascinated by a black bound book in the library of his master Nigritius, but an inward fear held him back. Now the question again arose, why, in the midst of the free field of knowledge, a tree of gorgeous and sweet-savored fruit should stand which he might not dare to approach? Who has the right, if the fruit is not indeed deadly, to say, Thou darest take of it, and thou not? Unseen by any strange eyes Baruch decided to open the book.

He read the New Testament.

His hands trembled as he held the book. It was

the force of habit which made such a commencement seem apostasy. But yet he did not give it up. A quiet power possessed him. He found no new explanation of the Cabbala, but other things most unanticipated. He now read a new Bible, and not like a child following the finger of its teacher; but, for the first time, with free eyes and unfettered, independent judgment. It reacted on his conception of what had hitherto been to him the only sacred writings. Must not these also be viewed from the standpoint of independent criticism? Is it impossible to review the familiar, accepted with a defined signification, in its simple reality?

He passed over the miracles without difficulty. The parables too, with their resemblances to the Talmud, impressed him but little. He had seen too often in the Rabbinical department how willingly inward incompleteness, which is but unripeness of reflection, and outward incompleteness, which is but cowardice, make use of such disguises. And is it not said that Christ even revealed the truth to his disciples alone? Is it impossible to teach men the naked truth? Is "becoming as a child," the return to the simple world of nature, the only means of salvation in an age confused with dogmas and ruined by Pharisees? Must not to "become as a man," a development and growth of mind in accordance with the recognized laws of nature, be a means of salvation? Do these alone



offer a firm foothold, because the ordinances of nature are in them immediately represented? Must the natural order too not be founded on knowledge?

Is not the "becoming as a child" in will often impossible, while manly development of mind is a necessary and rational task? Must not the Talmud phrase have its weight, "Everything is a gift of God, except the fear of God?" Is not righteousness, which is attained by free thought, firmer and higher than love? What is the pure unrevealed thought which (Mark iv. 34) Christ "without a parable spake he unto them," and which is not given in the Evangelists?

It cannot be said how much of the spirit of opposition inculcated by his early education lay in these questions of the young thinker. He sought to free himself from it, and it came to him as a new revelation, that nowhere is it said that God has appeared to Christ, and has spoken to him with a voice and by signs, and so on, as in the Old Testament, but that he had immediately revealed himself to the Apostles in Christ. It was no revelation face to face as to Moses; not in an outward material form but from within.

Baruch knew the dogmas but ill which in the churches were associated with the events of the life and the teachings of wisdom here given. As the highest that Christ had said of himself it is written that, "he was a Temple of God," and John



said, to impress this more strongly, that, "the Word was made flesh," for in Christ God had revealed himself most immediately.

Baruch by natural affinity felt extraordinarily attracted to the life and teachings of the Crucified One. Just because he came from a circle of life which would know naught thereof, and whose members were persecuted by the followers of Christ; just because he was hampered by no Church rules, he strove more freely towards pure justice, and learned to apply it against the phenomena spread abroad during so many centuries, whose outward embodiment was to remain unknown to him.

How many apparently antagonistic and mutually dissolving elements does youthful development require! And as the spring breezes blow the young tree hither and thither, it strikes its roots deeper into the nourishing earth, and awakes to fresh powers of growth. And, as in outward nature much enters the mind that does not immediately reappear in a recognizable form, it awaits the riper growth and development.

From the library of the Magister, Baruch must again bury himself in the study of the Cabbala, and he did so with evident zeal. The hidden disguises fascinated him ever anew, for he might find therein a solution of the enigma which puzzled him, but the incomprehensible was here only replaced by new incomprehensibility. Often a guiding sign

like a will-o'-the-wisp emerged from the darkness, but sank again without leaving trace or connection.

Baruch longed to be freed from the yoke which he had laid on himself by his dutiful visit to the Rabbi. It was done without his interference.

A Jewish colony was setting out for North Brazil. Rabbi Isaak Aboab joined it.

At sea, it was said, dolphins and sea-monsters surrounded the ship in which Rabbi Aboab was. All were in fear of death. Rabbi Aboab alone was tranquil. "Look! in these are the souls of the godless. Be still," he cried in a mighty voice over the floods; "have patience, yet longer ye must tarry, for the time is not yet come that will release you." He threw a parchment into the water and the monsters vanished.

The fair Sara did not live to see this miracle of her father's, which rumor spread so wide. She had shed many tears on taking leave of Baruch; she loved him secretly and passionately. She died on the passage out. When the exiles landed in North Brazil the first grave was dug in the newly won inheritance, and the fair, girlish corpse of the Cabbalist's daughter was buried therein. At her interment the Shophar was blown according to secret cabbalistic ordinances, a sign of the trumpet to be blown at the Resurrection of the dead. In a land never yet trodden by Jewish foot the trumpet

notes of Canaan already sounded which echoed from the olden times and from end to end of the living world.

A few days after the departure of Rabbi Aboab Baruch went at the usual hour to the house of Magister Nigritius. Frau Gertrui Ufmsand, the landlady, met him with the news that the Magister had that morning been found dead in his arm-chair, his lamp still burning.

Baruch went in and looked once more at the set face of his teacher; the gentleness of a child rested on the features of the dead; his favorite book, *Cicero de Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*, lay open before him.

Thus the youth was separated forever from the guides that should have led him to the treasures which men had acquired before him. How many thousands inherit the views of former ages without effort, in a well-trodden path, happy in the possession, while Baruch must ever strive anew and never rejoice in the acquisition.

In his youthful self-reproachfulness the loss of his leader seemed to him a just punishment for his sins, because of his silent opposition to the much lauded results. But could he do otherwise? Had fate called him to be a first man, untrammelled by the conclusions of his forefathers, unmisled by their guide-posts, out of the depths of his own life, out of his own conception of human nature and its laws to create salvation? Must each one to whom a

revelation of the Eternal is to be given withdraw from the confusion of human society to the lifeless desert, to solitudes where he is alone on earth, where only the pulsations of his heart will be the measure of his time?

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE LUCIANIST.

A NEW reflection that now occurred to Baruch did not, however, alter his ordinary way of life. We bid adieu to many things, and the separation is hard, for in their absence the knowledge of how dear and true they were receives renewed force.

On the last day of Atonement Baruch had prayed with a contrite spirit, "Lord God! let me die rather than be a sinner, or one of the godless!" He yet lived, but had lost his truest friend, who had stood by him in need.

Three times a day in the synagogue and elsewhere, when he drank a glass of water or ate an apple or piece of bread, when he began or ended his studies, on every occasion of enjoyment, on every event of life, he had repeated the appointed prayers; and at night, as he lay alone in bed, he repeated the alphabetical list of sins, and at each word struck himself remorsefully on the breast; then slept peacefully and pleasantly till morning.

Now, however, in the stillness of the night, doubt approached him with soft footfalls, and whispered in his ear, "Why do you strike your breast for things that trouble you not? Have you ever



robbed, stolen, wilfully sinned, given false counsel to any one, as it is here laid down in this cauldron of Hell?" He replied, "This prayer is not for me alone; I pray for the whole of Israel, for all mankind, indeed, that their sins may be forgiven them."

"What other will be benefited by thy word who has transgressed by deed?" was the reply. He broke off in the midst of the prayer and slept quietly.

"If thou prayest, doubt not," said wise Jesus Sirach; but how can a man command his doubts? And when Baruch stood in the synagogue, and the morning prayer lay before him, the tempter came to him and said, "Art thou here again at the sound of the bell? How canst thou take in thy mouth the words of David and other men spoken in their great need? Should thine own religious feelings be first awakened by the mighty words of strangers?" He resolved henceforth to pray only in forms chosen by himself, and at the times in which he felt so inclined. This did not happen for a long time, and when it did he felt that, from long disuse, he had fallen far from his Creator; he did not find him as readily as formerly. Of what use are words? he then said to himself; thought must suffice. If God is omniscient . . . if he is. Alas! he no longer knew how to pray.

He felt this yet more distressingly as he sat be-



side the sick bed of his moaning father; deep sighs rose from his laden breast; tears burnt in his eyes; he could no longer weep.

"Compose yourself, my son," said his father; "trust in the Almighty; he will help thee." He knew not what a two-edged dagger these words seemed to the heart of his son. No longer capable of thought, he sat cold and mute. The surgeon politician, Flyn, in the next chamber whistled the air of "Wilhelm von Nassawe" and spread plasters; the father held his son's hand and groaned perpetually. The Orange partisan outside suddenly was silent; Miriam opened the door, and Salomon de Silva, accompanied by a stranger, entered the room; the surgeon followed them with plasters and a case of instruments.

"I cannot undertake it alone," began Silva, "so I have asked my respected colleague, Dr. Van den Ende, to perform the operation with me. Are you now strong enough, and are you ready?"

"I am," said the sick man; "my life is in God's hand." A slight smile hovered round the corners of the newly arrived physician's mouth. Baruch had been watching him attentively, and thought he read in this smile the certain intelligence of his father's death. He was mistaken. Van den Ende asked in Latin whether they might converse in that language in presence of the son. Silva answered in the affirmative, as Baruch knew but little Latin.

The two physicians then conversed for a considerable time. Van den Ende had a strange mocking expression, and spoke eagerly. Long Flyns listened to the medical consultation with wide open eyes, and nodded to first one and then the other, as if he understood it all, while in fact he did not understand a word; and to Baruch's ears it was only a word here and there that was borne as if by the wind; nevertheless he gazed anxiously at the stranger physician. In the ways and appearance of this little man there lay such a rare serenity and peace of mind that Baruch, in the mood he was then in, was fascinated by him. His hands, which were covered nearly to the fingers with his crimped cuffs, were crossed on the gold head of his Spanish cane; he leaned comfortably over the cushioned back of his chair; his plump round figure seemed almost too extensive to be supported by feet so small and neat, ornamented as they were with buckles and ribbons; but attention was soon attracted again from them to his head; from out the curled folds of his peruke, which flowed to his shoulders, his round face looked good-naturedly at the world, and no one would have thought he had seen more than fifty winters, but for some wrinkles that nestled round his eyes when he smiled, and, like the dark red on his nose and its neighborhood, were evidences of a more advanced age. The deep-set grey eyes moved incessantly, but the outward qui-

etude of the little man was a contrast to the violent gesticulations of Silva, who sometimes seized his colleague unconsciously by the cloak, sometimes tapped him on the arm, sometimes on the shoulder, to exact proper attention to his words. As Baruch watched the stranger he could have envied him the rapid stream of Latin converse that flowed from his lips if he had dared to think of his studies beside his father's sick bed.

The operation was successful beyond all expectation. Van den Ende visited the convalescent nearly every day, and conversed principally with Baruch; the restlessness and active mind of the youth did not long remain hidden from his penetrating sight. The grateful father willingly granted his request that he might instruct Baruch in classical learning.

Baruch accompanied the physician to his dwelling at the end of Warmoes Street, not far from St. Olave's Church, and the chapel built on the model of the Temple of Jerusalem. Baruch had once passed there with Chisdai. Chisdai spat at it three times; Baruch merely remarked that the builder had departed very much from the original, but that it could not be otherwise, for even those learned in the Talmud could not have a perfect idea of the outward and inward appearance of the Temple of Jerusalem, since the real original was in Heaven itself. Now, however, he troubled himself but little about the architecture of the Temple in heaven, or

on earth, as he entered the house of the physician. Here he found himself in a wholly novel atmosphere. Joyous singing in a young girl's voice, accompanied by an organ, reached his ears even on the ground floor. The physician led his pupil into a large room, and left him alone for a while. Bright colored pictures looked down on him from all sides, wantonly attracting remark: here a Leda rising from her bath, an oil painting in fresh, alluring tints; there a Venus, as she arose in all her glorious perfection from the foam; near her a Semele on whom a cloud was sinking; on the opposite wall hung Flemish still-life, fruit and flowers, landscapes inimitable in truth of coloring. Little statuettes of white and tinted marble stood on the inlaid stands. Canaries in gilt cages repeated their well-studied songs, and between whiles interposed their powerful native wood-notes. Roses, tulips, carnations, lilies, and anemones bloomed round the windows in ornamental pots, and drew attention there. The physician returned, and explained the beauties of the pictures to Baruch; some he took down, and dusted them with a sponge for a better view. Especially long he lingered over a picture of natural solitude by his contemporary, Jacob Ruysdael, and a rich landscape by his rival Nicolaus Berghem, then still alive. He then led Baruch into another room, that created even greater astonishment. The walls were hung with anatom-

ical drawings, one above another; glass cases, in which butterflies and beetles were well arranged, hung between; stuffed birds sat on little twigs fixed into the book-cases. At one end of the room stood phials and retorts; in one corner lay a large heap of grey papers, from which emerged the stems and leaves of dried plants; there also stood a large skeleton in whose bony fingers was placed a gilt paper sceptre. Above the green-covered writing-table stood a marble bust, the acute Greek face crowned with a laurel wreath.

Baruch took note of his surroundings, in which, in spite of the superabundance, a certain order was visible. Life could be filled with other things than biblical rules, commentaries, and religious ceremonies; here was quite another world, thus he assured himself, and the physician did not disturb his thoughts, for he was seeking through his shelves for a book. At last he chose *Cicero de Officiis*, and required Baruch to construe it. The tutor shook his head often reflectively; not that Baruch knew no Latin; that could not be accurately said of him; it was that with his characteristic quickness of mind he burst the grammatical forms with a wonderful comprehension of the author whom he read. If but a few words were clear that gave an idea of the progress of the narrative, or indicated the aim of the train of thought, he would rapidly, and often correctly, connect the sense of the whole. More fre-



quently, however, in following the train of the author's ideas, he would spring over them to his own much more widely extended combinations. Van den Ende saw that in this case a wholly different mode of instruction must be carried out; here was a well-grown tree that had seen the flowers and fruit of many seasons fall, and which must now be transplanted to another soil.

The progress that succeeded was not, however, as great as might have been expected, the lessons being nearly always interrupted by discussions on wholly different subjects. Baruch had gained confidence in his teacher, and told him once in a confidential tone how he had lost the power to pray. The physician laughed so heartily that he was obliged to hold his sides; but he perceived how seriously this annoyed his pupil.

"Excuse me!" he said. "I am not laughing at you; ha! ha! ha! We had, in the lunatic asylum at Milan, an excellent example of a theological-philosophical Narcissus. He covered his face with a cloth, and remained the whole day on his knees, praying, 'Holy St. Christopher stand by me, and forgive me my sins.' Ha! ha! ha! and if he were asked, 'Who and where is the holy St. Christopher?' he stood up, and lifted the cloth from his face, crying in a majestic tone, 'Do you not see the glory round my brow? Kneel down and pray. I am the holy Christopher.' Ha! ha! ha! If one only



thinks about it awhile, there lay much method in his madness. What is the use of prayer? To influence God? Half a fool could see that it would be a contradiction if God allowed himself to be disturbed by us. The proverb says '*ora et labora;*' it all comes to this, then, that it raises and tranquillizes our so-called souls, which are oppressed and perplexed by our sorrows and pains; if I could do it by an anecdote, or a chapter on logic and physic, it would be just as good; so don't trouble yourself because you have become independent; don't hang your head, but be merry and good-humored. I am so, and for more than twenty years have never thought of prayer. If one could only bring up the young without wasting the fairest time of life in useless fiddle-faddle!" So said the physician, and his little grey eyes twinkled. Baruch could not oppose his exposition, but from that time he was more reserved with him; he diligently studied the works on mathematics and natural science that he received from him, questioned him on any difficulty therein, but carefully avoided any reference to his own condition of mind. The physician, however, knew how to awaken confidence by his insinuating frankness.

"I was once as hampered by doubts as you," he once said to Baruch. "And I know what the effect of such bondage is; even now when I think I have freed myself I catch myself in that exclusiveness

that proceeds from the fancied possession of the one true creed. I am not come like you from the Bible itself to the way of freedom. It was a peculiar and in itself weaker impulse that led me into it. I was sent as a pious Catholic to the University of Leyden. One Ascension Eve I had studied so long that my lamp burned out; as I lay quietly in bed the thought passed like lightning through my mind, 'Where is that illuminating power now? The fire has annihilated its fuel and flowed into the Universe. What if it should be so with our souls also?' My teacher had impressed on me the once wide-spread theory that life was a process of burning. It can be called so without explaining much thereby; what we call soul, thought, and sensation is nothing but a combination of matter that has its nourishment from matter, palpable or impalpable, and will again become such. One man digests with difficulty, another with ease, one with comfort, another with discomfort."

"In what then lies our superiority to the brutes?"

"Who told you that such must exist? But we are indeed superior, only in so far, however, that we are more richly gifted and composed of finer material, therefore the so-called immaterial essences of color, sound, and language act more powerfully on us. The brain of a man outweighs a fiftieth of his whole body, therefore he has more of what is

called reason and intellect. In an ox, for example, the brain amounts to hardly an eight-hundredth part of its weight, therefore it is stupid; the elephant is ponderous but sagacious, because he has a proportionately large brain. Injure your brain and you become an idiot; why then do you talk of your future life and your eternal existence?"

"Our destiny then should be to make our life-work, or our existence, as you call it, as agreeable as possible."

"Decidedly."

"I did not think you were so selfish," replied Baruch.

"I am not selfish," retorted the physician. "I would joyfully give fortune and life for the good of the community, for the State, but not for religion and faith; I would not pull a hair from my wig for them. The surest and highest good of mankind lies in the well-being of the State, and to care for that is the destined work of man; in all else we but mount from one cloud to another."

"Your endeavors for the good of your fatherland and mankind were in the end then nothing more than to make it possible for this or that individual, or, if you prefer it, the community at large, to eat, drink, and take their pleasure with more ease and comfort; in your extension of this you obtain nothing higher, only something wider."

"I will talk with you openly," added the phy-

sician, coming nearer to his scholar with a rare earnestness in his manner "Each one must go through the crisis in which you are now. I too was enthusiastic at your age about the higher or spiritual needs of mankind, and thought they ought never to be dissevered from their strivings towards the good of the community. I was in that sense a zealous Catholic, but only in that sense. It was the time when

"Gomar and Arminius with rage and grief  
Strove which ought to be the best belief."

I saw the Advocate mount the scaffold, because he defended himself from the old Jewish creed by which, through election, they would make Christians into a body-guard of God; there, leaning on his staff, the septuagenarian Oldenbarnaveldt stood on the scaffold.

"O God!" he cried; "what will become of mankind?" And all around stood the brainless crowd, heads beyond heads, and gloated over it, and shouted as that noblest head of all was severed from the body. There and then I learned to despise the multitude; there I gained the knowledge that before all things it is necessary to reject all influence from what the crowd calls religion. Superstition is a hollow tooth; it leaves you long in peace, but a harder morsel, or a colder whiff of air, and you are maddened by it. Try to draw it out,

the patient strikes you in the face, you leave a splinter in and cannot extract it except with the danger of tearing the gum, or destroying a nerve. Whoever would really help says he would but look at it, then fixes the pincers in the jaws, then back! out with it; but it is better not to help him who has not the courage to let himself be helped."

"You make the endeavor after possession and increase of the ideal attainments of mankind an intellectual luxury."

"Yes, it has no practical aim; I don't grudge it to you Jews, if you like to erect a heavenly kingdom, since you have no earthly one. Why do you laugh? Am I not right?"

"The Talmud says that the best of the physicians go to hell; the professors of healing then had evidently the same ideas as you have now."

"What does your Talmud matter to me? Your Moses was a great statesman, but wise Solomon is the man for me; he understood life, that is why he says in Ecclesiastes, 'Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry.'"

"Then the brutes best fulfil their destiny, and the mollusks who consist of a stomach are the most perfect of creations."

"No; I grant you a brute can be merry, but man is superior in this, not that he walks upright, can



read and write, and thereby know what happened before him and therefore may happen to him; no, but *men alone can laugh*. Democritus and Lucian were the two most sagacious men in Greece, the others have mostly thrashed 'empty straw. I am an old practitioner, believe me, no pleasure in the world is so permanent as laughter, and in the enjoyment of it men remain normally fresh and healthy."

"It is odd that you are again in agreement with the Talmud, for it says there, 'that laughter is the prerogative of mankind.'"

"Truly? Then there is some wisdom in that heavy book, but I go still further, and say, it is a prerogative of men above gods, for he whom nothing surprises cannot laugh."

"Let us remain among men," interrupted Baruch. "What in your view of things becomes of the poor who moisten their crusts with tears, the old, the sick, and the sorrowful, who find nothing to enjoy, and nothing to laugh at? Where are comfort and joy for them?"

"Such should believe and be merry in their godly faith."

"But if they come to a fuller knowledge, and all is overturned?"

"There is no fear of that, it will never happen; in all times there are but few clear-sighted ones; the rabble will always believe: it must be so, be-



cause they are wanting in cultivation and judgment; otherwise they would never be kept within bounds."

"These are they who count themselves free; even infidelity has its elect!" Such were Baruch's thoughts as he went away.

On yet another occasion the books lay open before them, and teacher and learner spoke of other things than what was written therein.

"Believe me," said the physician, and he blinked with his grey eyes, like one who has penetrated the deepest secrets; "believe me, I often looked behind the curtains; I know the matrimonial history of what men call matter and spirit, and have coupled with a religious blessing."

"Yet every one desires to be believed," answered the pupil. "But if I had wished it I should have remained among the Rabbis; perhaps I might have succeeded in building yet another story to that Tower of Babel, the Talmud, which at last may reach to Heaven; but I wish for knowledge, certainty."

"That you will only find in matter; of all other things I can prove to you as readily that they exist as that they do not exist."

"In the combination of my own unbroken succession of impressions, feelings, and thoughts I know myself to be a spiritual unit, independent of, and unconnected with, the body. Suicide, how-

ever much it is to be deprecated, does it not prove an authority of the human mind over the body, which extends even to the annihilation thereof?"

"The arrogance of humanity!" answered the physician; "that is the original sin that adheres to us all. What you speak of may just as well be the result of physical causes, what men call instinct in animals without reason. For example, a marten or a rat which is caught by one foot in a trap will bite off that foot with its own teeth and run away. A yet more striking example: in my travels in lower Italy I often saw the peasants enjoy a cruel pleasure in throwing a scorpion into the centre of a pretty large circle of glowing cinders. The poor animal tried to fly, and shot from one side to the other, but was everywhere stopped by the glowing ring; it raised its head as if entreating the mercy of the bystanders, but all laughed and cheered, and no one offered it means of exit; then it shot into the circle in a rage, hunted by anxiety and despair, and tried to force the glowing cinders with its claws, but quickly retreated and writhed through its whole body. When it no longer saw means of escape, it crouched in the middle of the circle far away from the flames. Without motion it lay as if dead, but suddenly putting out the sting of its tail, it reared itself with all its might, stabbed itself through, and was dead. Tell me, did the scorpion feel its independent spiritual individuality?"

Baruch would have conceded this, and allowed spiritual powers to the whole of nature's created beings; but he felt that he could not lay his own reflections in the scale against so rich a treasure of experience, where continual novelties were displayed before his eyes which he could not judge of in a moment. An inner voice opposed the views thus offered to him, but he did not know on what to ground his opposition. He was silent. His teacher did not doubt that he had won a proselyte, and invited Baruch to come the following evening, when he would reveal the secrets of a doctrine that would extort his astonishment and wonder.

Baruch appeared at the appointed hour. Van den Ende led him into his study and bolted the door behind them, closed the window-shutters, and listened to hear that no one was near the room. Baruch almost laughed at the comically serious manner of the physician as he placed a lighted candle in the fingers of the skeleton.

"Do you know the legend of the prior of St. Dominic at Tiel?" inquired the physician, as he sought for something in a chest.

"No!" answered Baruch.

"Listen," continued his companion. "The pious prior was once visited by the devil while he was engaged in reading a holy book. The devil wanted to distract the pious man's attention from his occupation; he jumped on the table and played all

manner of antics before him; but the prior obliged him to hold the candle for him until it was burned down, when he graciously let him go. Look at the Domine there, he shall light us while we read the devil's testament. Ah! there is the key. Look at that bony frame a little again; the whole scaffolding was once filled up with fat; that was a belly that licked up many a scrap from the table of Prince Maurice of Orange, those cheek and forehead bones had a carbuncle red covering; in those holes sat obsequious eyes, which often practised the human prerogative of looking heavenward; before those teeth was a pair of lips that railed much at the Remonstrance, and exercised abstinence in the sipping of costly Rhine wine. That was once the fat Domine who abused the noble Oldenbarnaveldt most, and led him on to the scaffold. He was predestined to be stolen by me for a body to cut up. I was in danger of death for the deed. It is a pretty history; I will tell it you another time. Holy Laurentius! here is another disciple who makes a pilgrimage to you to get wisdom from your white head. Rejoice, for the crowd shall soon be as the sands of the sea, or the stars in the firmament." At these words the physician crossed his arms on his breast, and bowed three times to the skeleton.

"Ha, ha, ha!" he interrupted himself, "it is too good. I am getting quite biblical, but I will not

make any more nonsense for you." He then mounted on a stool, opened the upper part of the skull with a key, took a manuscript out, and said as he descended:

"As long as he was living he harbored nothing so clever there as I have given him in charge. Swear that you will not tell any one that you have seen this book in my care; my citizenship would be endangered."

"How shall I swear it?" asked Baruch, while he resolved to learn nothing rather than take such another oath as the Cabbalist had imposed.

The physician misunderstood him.

"You are right," he said; "if you would swear you could not understand this. Look at this round, well-formed, legible writing; so fairly men write in the devil's offices. The book is inherited from a Dominican friar, who brought it from Augsburg; a German emperor, Frederick the Second of Hohenstaufen, was the author. The title you will easily understand, it is called *De Tribus Impostoribus*; there are only nine and twenty paragraphs of it. Sit there and I will read it to you in Dutch."

Baruch shuddered at the utter infidelity and cold-blooded dissection of all faith here presented to his mind's eye; and when he heard the twenty-first paragraph, where it says, "*Quid enim Deus sit, in revelatione qualicunque obscurius longe est quam*



*antea*, it seemed as if his whole religious belief were being torn out with red hot tongs.

“Young friend, when you know a little more of life,” said the physician as he rose, “you will see that the morality which is bartered in the market of life was not created out of ink-pots. Your Judaism and our Judaism are worth nothing now; your Judaism was a mummy long ago, and a puff of air will scatter it in dust; ours, to the beginning of the last century, was pure barbarism; it has imbibed a classic spirit and this spirit will explode it. Enter the bright halls of classic wisdom; you will there learn to enjoy, to jest, and to be silent.”

“A horrible labyrinth!” said Baruch in his heart as he went away; “but I feel that a clue will be found.”



## CHAPTER X.

### BENEDICTUS SIT.

“A maid in the morn should early rise,  
And seek where her beloved one lies;  
Beneath the lime trees she sought him,  
Nor found her love where she thought him.”

SO sang Olympia van den Ende, and drew out the long resounding notes of her small organ in powerful chords as her father entered the room.

“You have quite risen to your paradise of song to-day again,” said he, “and are no longer aware of what happens below in our unmusical world. We passed your room an hour ago. I have brought the much spoken of M. de Spinoza here with me at last. Allow me to introduce my daughter; she is accredited minister in my sacred doctrinal office; you must be on good terms with her.”

“My father has spoken to me of you whenever he returned from your house,” said Olympia, “and I am rejoiced to see my wish fulfilled at last. But though I have heard so much about you, I see now that I had quite a false conception of your personal appearance. Tell me, since you are a philosopher, may I not take that as a proof that all our impressions of persons and things lying out of our imme-

diate sphere of observation are incorrect?" What a first encounter was this, which straightway threw down a problem to be solved, and dubbed him for the first time philosopher!

Baruch lowered his eyes to avoid her scrutiny of his features; he bowed mutely, and knew not what to reply.

"You will find my daughter a half-fledged philosopher, with whom you can dispute as much as you like," said the physician to help Baruch out of the difficulty which he, however, was hardly conscious of.

"Oldenburg has sent me such an exquisite song to-day," said Olympia to her father as she passed him the sheets of music and turned again to Baruch. "Are you musical, Herr von Spinoza?"

"No."

"But you can sing psalms? You must sing me a Hebrew psalm some day, I want to hear how it sounds. Have they still the melodies of King David?"

"We have much older ones; for nearly all our synagogue chants traditionally come from Mount Sinai, though the words were composed much later; the melodies were meanwhile passed on from mouth to mouth."

"That is interesting; it is just as if clothes walked without bodies, or an arsenal fought a battle without soldiers."

"I spoke only of the accepted tradition," answered Baruch.

"Oh, but it is a beautiful legend. It must have been glorious," continued Olympia: "The rolling thunder, and the sounding of the innumerable trumpets was so magnificent an accompaniment, truly *furioso*, but it must have been so; sing me something from the Sinai Oratorio, if my Christian ears may hear it."

Baruch excused himself on the plea that he did not sing; but Olympia was so imperative that Baruch did not know how to avoid the awkward situation.

"A musical fanatic!" said Van den Ende. "Wait awhile till Herr von Spinoza offers you the scale of his creed himself; you put people who do not know you in very awkward positions with your queer whims."

Olympia excused herself to Baruch for her vehemence, she was so excited, he must not judge unfavorably of her. After a short stay Baruch went away in unwonted perplexity; he thought Olympia had made fun of him, and not of him alone, so much as of all Judaism. The perception of this disturbed this deserter from his early associations much more now, when he felt himself cut off in thought and action from his associates.

Such was his first meeting with Olympia on the day on which Van den Ende brought him first into

his house. He often encountered her afterwards, and exchanged a few words with her; but otherwise troubled himself but little about her. He might have said with Job xxxi. 1, "I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?" But now the time was come when he must think upon a maid, and hang with fascinated attention on her every word. The physician had gone on a journey, and had resigned his lessons to his daughter; Baruch too was her pupil.

Like her namesake Olympia Morata of Ferrara, whose Greek and Latin verse, in the last century, had been the wonder of her contemporaries, Olympia van den Ende was quite at home in the world of classics, but inclined more to scientific investigation, so that she might easily have aspired to be crowned with the hood of a doctor of philosophy; but she knew too well that the black velvet cap with its edging of Brussels point lace suited her blonde locks and white skin much better than the pointed red velvet hood of a doctor. Cicero's own daughter Julia did not answer the letters of her eloquent father in more elegant Latin than the daughter of the Amsterdam physician. Her white hands often bore traces of learned ink, for she exercised a rigorous censorship over her pupil's modes of expression, if they would not have been accepted in a Roman citizen; her smooth white brow gathered into folds when a barbarism came under her notice;

her clear blue eyes sparkled, and her mouth, which usually had a certain austerity in its lines, smiled pleasantly and gently when she saw that her pupils had made no false quantities in their Latin versés.

Baruch sat before his instructress with some dissatisfaction in their first lessons, as she demonstrated the finer points of syntax in the periods of the "History of Alexander" by Curtius. Olympia was irritated at the awkward Jew, who answered all her questions as bashfully as possible; she stood up and paced the room thoughtfully. Baruch watched the tall, slender figure with its majestic movements, and instead of following the manœuvres of Alexander, he studied the features of Olympia, the syntax of whose enthusiastic temper and acuteness of intellect he could as little decipher as the involved periods of Curtius.

The instruction at first was as unsatisfactory in this case as in that of the old Magister Nigritius; for Baruch, since their first meeting, had always approached Olympia with dislike. She soon, however, understood where to find points of agreement between their differently constituted minds, which made their meetings more agreeable to Baruch. He was happy soon to find their conversation of anything rather than Latin. He conversed with Olympia on the ruling laws of history, on the fate of men and nations; she found Baruch's ideas peculiar enough, often strange, for he was

accustomed to look at everything from the standpoint of Jewish history, and to judge by comparison or affinity with that. This gave it a more interesting turn for Olympia, for all that Baruch said was so uncommon, and showed such unusual intellectual activity, that Olympia felt absolved from the sin of unconscientiousness in neglecting instruction so little needed. The minds of both penetrated to the remotest zones and periods, and there found each other again, for both felt the same impulse to discover the origin of the world and its designs. Baruch now looked forward eagerly to the lesson hour, and set out on his way thither long before the hour chimed. It often happened that Olympia, looking out of the window, would see him far off, and nod to him kindly.

One day they had been reading in the eighth chapter of the seventh book the well-known conversation of the Scythian envoys with Alexander. Olympia remarked, "It is characteristic that Valerius Maximus relates how Aristarchus had said to the king, 'According to Democritus there are innumerable worlds.' 'Alas!' said the king, 'I unfortunately have not yet conquered one.'"

"In the Talmud there are many extraordinary legends about the 'Macedonian Alexander,' for whom the world was too narrow," replied Baruch.

"Oh, tell me them, do tell them," said Olympia.



“I do so like such flowers as these which have sprung from the glowing East.”

There was a knock heard, Olympia cried “Enter !” and a stately man with handsome, refined features entered the room. With quiet familiarity he approached Olympia, took her hand, and pressed it to his lips.

“I am rejoiced,” he said, “to be permitted to kiss this hand that holds the plectrum and the style of history with equal skill, and has already pointed out to so many the way to Attica’s and Latium’s glorious fields.”

“It would have been a pity if you had not been destined for a diplomatic career,” replied Olympia.

“Otherwise I should not have had the pleasure of telling you the news which has been brought to-day that your favorite, the pious General Oliver Cromwell, is named Lord Protector by the army. Not for nothing has he expelled the Parliament with the oratorical epithet of ‘you drunkards !’”

“You always laugh at his oratory; he is no Demosthenes,” said Olympia, “but a strong character with deep insight. I am very glad he has risen so high. But how do things go with us? Can you tell me whether there are definite tidings how many men were lost in the last storm?”

“No; but some comedy was even there mingled with the tragedy. I have often told you that my

\* native Lower Saxony had considerable similarity in customs and ideas with your native land; in one thing, however, they are very different, and that is in their treatment of the Jews. In my pious town they never would have suffered one of the children of Abraham to equip a ship and send it to sea in the name of 'the Jew;' is not the Northern Ocean Christian water? So the sea has overwhelmed the Jews first. I heard from my window this morning an old sailor telling his comrades that it all came of associating with Jews."

Baruch had risen when the stranger entered, he had put his book under his arm, and would have taken leave of Olympia; twice he would have bowed, but as the stranger stood between she did not see him; he advanced again, but again the stranger interposed between him and Olympia.

"I must explain," continued the stranger, "why I have come at so unusual an hour. You are going to the Rederykers Kamer \* this evening, of course. I wanted to remind you to go to the Botanical Garden first; you will see what you have probably never seen before, a palm-tree in bloom; the flowers are so large that ten families of elves could easily live therein."

Here was another pause, and Baruch at last

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\* A sort of theatre.

succeeded in bowing to Olympia and stammering out a few words.

"You must not go yet, Herr von Spinoza," she said; "you must first tell me the legend, and when I go to see the lilies of the south I can tell them something from their native land."

"The sailor's legends may be the truer, I therefore prefer to go," said Baruch with a glance at the stranger.

"Ah!" said he rising, "my old friend Casper Barläus was right, he had had much intercourse with Jews, and was at first prejudiced in their favor, thinking them all witty; but he often complained of one of their failings, their sensitiveness; the most innocent look, the most harmless jest, was mistaken for mockery. I can assure you, that it was not my object to offend you in the least, and Jufrow Olympia can bear witness to my most unchristian partiality for the Jews."

"Yes," she said, "and it was all my fault for not introducing you; Herr von Spinoza you know now; and this is Herr Oldenburg, a member of the Bremen Embassy. Now pray tell me the legend, or else I shall think myself the cause of a misunderstanding that I should greatly regret." Baruch tried to protest.

"I will give him a lesson," said Oldenburg. "Remember always that Jufrow Olympia prays daily 'May my will be done in Heaven as on

earth,' so begin to narrate; you must do it in the end."

Baruch then related the well-known legend of how Alexander advanced to the gates of Eden with his army. Oldenburg then told, out of the old poems of the priest Lamprecht and Ulrich von Eschenbach, the glorious legends in which the poetical German spirit had celebrated the great deeds of Alexander. And in interchange of opinions on the great hero of old times, whose life, though he had found no Homer, the poetical legends of all nations, both Eastern and Western, had colored in brightest hues, the three passed a pleasant hour. The stranger and Olympia stared in astonishment at Baruch when he declared with quiet decision that fear was the original and sustaining cause of superstition. He quoted Alexander as a striking proof of this, for whenever circumstances were unfavorable, or misfortunes occurred, he called in sacrifices and superstitious observances to his aid. While Baruch sought the corroborating passages in Curtius, from Book iv. Chap. 10, and Book v. Chap. 4, etc., his two listeners recognized an extraordinary mind that would shed new meanings on the past.

From that time Oldenburg came oftener, when he knew that Baruch was with Olympia, and she was glad to see the two young men become daily more friendly. She took a certain pride in being

the link between two such dissimilar characters, and she understood how to bring to light continual affinities between the travelled experience and extensive reading of Oldenburg, and the deep penetrative spirit of Baruch. Besides the accomplishments of a finished man of the world Oldenburg possessed another quality, seldom noticed, but which, though unnoticed, is an important element in a first impression—this is a full-toned, well-modulated voice. All that Oldenburg said received through this harmonious quality a fulness and roundness which immediately and involuntarily attracted favor. Baruch and Oldenburg were friends without a word passing between them on the subject.

“You will soon have finished your Latin course,” said Olympia to Baruch one day; “how would it be if you gave me a course of Hebrew lessons?”

“I recommend to you then the Polyglot of the Father in the Church, Origen,” said Oldenburg laughing, “then you may jump from one language to another, as it may please your restless mind. Apply to me, and I will get you appointed to the chair of Casaubon or Scaliger. I can see how the studiosi would troop to the college, if the learned Olympia van den Ende were to explain the Song of Solomon in the language of the original.”

“Remember,” interrupted Baruch, “it is the sacred language that you wish to learn.”



“Are you a saint then?” retorted she. “You must have a Hebrew name; what are you called?”

“Baruch.”

“Bahruch!” exclaimed Olympia, shaking with laughter. “Bahruch! ugh! it makes me quite ill and frightened, it is so like a conjuration. The name would sound lugubrious in music; I should accompany it with F minor; listen!” She went to the organ, and sang “Bahruhch!” over and over again, accompanying it with the dreary note. “For Heaven’s sake, give up the name, or something bad will happen to you,” she continued. “I had a dear friend whose beloved was named Balthasar Prompronius, who was very unfortunate. ‘Dear Balthasar!’ no, that will not do, that cannot be said expressively, it will not come out of your mouth, and cracks your ear; my friend was very unhappy, for she was always obliged to say ‘dear,’ alone, and at last meant some one else by it. The bad taste of the name had a great deal to do with her misfortunes, it is my firm belief.”

“You are not such an infidel as you represent yourself,” said Baruch.

“Bahruch!” chanted Olympia again, and put forth the full power of her deepest notes to lay the most melancholy stress on the name. “Baruch! no, that will not do; for your future wife’s sake, take care that she does not meet the fate of my



poor Matilda; follow my advice and take another name. Has this cry of woe a meaning?"

"Oh, yes! it means 'blessed.'"

"Bravo! Glorious!" cried Olympia, and clapped her hands. "Benedictus! that is a glorious name. If you were a pope you would be the XIV.; seventy-five years after your death you would be canonized, and people would make pilgrimages to the wonder-working tomb of St. Benedict. 'Dear Benedict,' listen how soft and tender that sounds; but Bah-ruch, brrr! Give me your hand, and promise me henceforth to be called Benedictus. You are a learned man, so you must have a Latin name. You will be very celebrated some day, and then I shall have handed down a name to posterity. You must leave some occasion for wit to your adversaries. I can see how an anathema against you would begin: '*Benedictus est Spinoza, quem rectius maledictum dixeris.*'\* The Romans turned the town Malevent in Lower Italy into Benevent, and the wise Magister, who christened you so wittily, was after all only guilty of a plagiarism; but I can imagine how he would stroke his chin, the black cap on his learned head pushed back, simpering with satisfaction that he had branded you in a

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\* Blessed is Spinoza named, who should rather be called cursed.

word And alas! the merit will never be recognized; I am the originator of this sublime jest; but for me you would have been called Baruch forever; a name that Aristophanes himself might laugh at, but could never make a jest of."

Olympia thus talked on, all opposition and interruption from Baruch being fruitless.

"If you will not follow my advice with free will," continued Olympia, "I will call you nothing from this minute but Rabbi Bahruhch; yes, I will buy a parrot, and teach him to repeat the words 'Rabbi Bahruhch' till he speaks them fluently; then I will hang him in the window, and when you come near the house he will call out to you, 'Rabbi Bahruhch! Rabbi Bahruhch!' I can see how the people will stop before the house to see what the individual can look like who is called by a name that sounds like a raven's croak. For the last time, will you follow my advice?"

"Did I not tell you the first day we met," said Oldenburg, "that Jufrow Olympia was the incarnation of self-will? Obey without dispute. You surely will not bring down strange torments on yourself?"

Baruch consented, and gave Olympia his hand, which she pressed warmly.

"Sit down," she said; "and you, Herr Oldenburg, come here, you shall be witness of the baptism." She then laid her hands on Baruch's head, and

said, "In the name of Aristotle, Bacon, and Descartes I give thee the name Benedictus; that the name may become great, and last forever and ever, and that, whenever thou writest that name, thou mayest think of her from whom the word arose. *Benedicite! In sæcula sæculorum, Amen!*" The concluding words she sang to a church chant.

"Have I done it right?" she asked as she raised her hands, and as if involuntarily stroked Benedict's cheek with the right.

"So well," said Oldenburg, "that if you should find my name Henry, or Hendrik as it is called in this country, unmusical, I would let you give me another without fear of being accused of blasphemy. I should so like to know how it feels to be under your blessing hands."

Olympia blushed, but passed her hand over her face to hide her confusion.

## CHAPTER XI.

### A NEW MAN.

FROM the bright friendly circle where he was named Benedict he must return to the monotonous and uncongenial surroundings where he was called Baruch, and think and act as such.

Why was the name Benedict more harmonious than the name Baruch? It was only the prejudice of a Gentile, to whom the sacred language was unfamiliar and harsh. But yet is not this naming anew a sign that he was henceforth to live and think like the whole intellectual world in word and deed? Is there not a deeper meaning in the fact that the patriarchs Abraham and Jacob altered their names on receiving a new covenant? Darest thou create precedents for thyself from the Bible? And always the Bible? . . .

Pondering thus Spinoza left the Van den Ende's house. His family name remained unaltered, and with it the indissoluble connection between his past and future; within these limits and depending on these associations to no one is granted the power of freely following out a train of thought. The crown he had once received in the title of Rabbi had passed from his brow; a fair consecrating hand

had rested on his head, and given him another name.

He went straight from Olympia to the School of the Crown of the Law. It struck him as irony that here, in this unrelieved monotony, men should crown themselves. It all seemed so dull and depressing, even more so than it really was. The gay jests and pleasant voice of Olympia still rang in his memory, the Litany of the scholars sitting here and there at the tables sounded discordantly in his ears. He sat down in a corner to follow his own thoughts undisturbed over an open book, when Chisdai came to him and asked him the meaning of a difficult passage in the Talmud. Baruch did not spend long over it.

“I always said,” began Chisdai, “that you would be a perfect Samson in intellect and learning. If people will not let you in and out, you take the door, locks and bolts and all, on your back, and carry them off; but for God’s sake, and your hopes of his mercy, do not let yourself be allured by the Delilah to whom you are now straying. I have never seen her myself—God forbid!—but from what I hear from others she is no longer young and should not be fair.”

“I do not know what you mean; let me alone,” said Baruch crossly.

“What I mean?” replied the other. “How you pretend! The physician’s daughter, I mean; what

is her name? Oh, Olympia van den Ende, who is so clever that she speaks seven languages. I entreat you, follow my advice; if those over there really mean well by you, they will have you out and out; act like a Samson, catch the foxes, bind their tails, set fire to them, and send them into the ripe corn-fields of the Philistines. You understand what I mean; but I fear, I fear, they will—God forbid!—put out your eyes; they will take away thy strength, and make thee a jest.”

“It is a pity,” replied Baruch, “you have not kept this new application of Samson’s history to religious controversy for your morning’s sermon. But, to add the conclusion to it, I will tell you, that if they could or would do what you mean, I too have the courage to cry with Samson, ‘Let me die with the Philistines!’ and act accordingly.”

It pained him like sacrilege to have Olympia’s name spoken by Chisdai, and to see her graceful figure dragged into that dismal place. His dislike to Chisdai increased more and more, for he saw clearly how he watched every turn of his mind, and spied into its workings; he must have some special object in it, for Chisdai was not to be kept at a distance by even the most marked rudeness. On that Sabbath Chisdai had given the first public evidence of his oratorical powers. The attempt was an utter failure.

“I was not wholly unfavorably disposed towards



Chisdai's suit for your sister Miriam," said his father as he left the synagogue with Baruch. "Chisdai has some fortune, and will some day have a fair addition to it; he is not so very plain, and I cannot understand what has come to Miriam, that she says she feels such an unconquerable aversion for him. I see now, however, that he will never be the remarkable man we thought he would be; and if I am not to have the pleasure of seeing my daughter the wife of a celebrated and learned author, I would rather give her to Samuel Casseres." Baruch assented.

"I think it is time," continued his father, "that you should make yourself heard; it will give honor to your whole family. I should like to see you up there with my old eyes. Who knows how long I may be here to have the pleasure?"

Baruch made no reply; he thought a horrible dizziness would seize him if he stood up there like the others who spoke with such unhesitating decision, as if they had seen the Lord God shuffle the cards, and knew exactly why he played this or that trump, and what he would or ought to play out in the future.

"Why are you so thoughtful?" began his father again. "I verily believe you are shy; shame on you! you were so bold once. Do you remember how you once thought it would be the greatest happiness to stand up there, and pour forth the living

word of the Spirit of God for the whole congregation?"

"I am ill, I have almost always palpitation of the heart. You know not long ago I spat blood."

"Pooh, pooh, excuses! I have already spoken to our Chacham Aboab; he is willing to let you preach this day fortnight. I will speak to Silva, our doctor; if he allows it you must fulfil my wishes, or I will not forgive you it on my death-bed."

What could he reply to this? Silva gave permission, and Baruch must prepare to preach. Who can imagine the conflicting feelings that were aroused by the composition of this sermon? Who can calculate the mocking thoughts that followed him when he went to Olympia, and read with her the pictures of the gay, pleasurable life of the heathens; when he enjoyed the worldly jests of Oldenburg, and then returned to the working out of his sermon?

The young preacher had many books open before him in which to search for examples, similes and questions. His hand rested on an open volume of Maimonides, and his eyes wandered to the rows of books in shelves against the wall. There rested the words and thoughts of vanished minds. They too struggled, doubted, sorrowed and at last found peace. Is it not presumption to turn their life and learning to folly? Thousands were wiser than thou art. Bow thy proud spirit in humility, and thou

wilt again enter into peace; thou art heir of the blessedness which made happy those of old times. Thou wilt and thou canst, thou must. How wilt thou find the strength for a lonely road in which no one will follow thee but thine own consciousness? The spirits of thy forefathers rise and bless thee, enclosing thee in their circle. . . .

Such is the traditional consolation which upholds the wavering powers as if with supernatural aid; long vanished capabilities return to help and support.

A radiant ecstasy shone from the eyes of the gazer, and his left hand was laid on his breast as the new peace possessed it. Will this traditional consolation and resignation, which now pacifies the stormy struggle, always bring the same calm? Or will the yearnings again awake in the soul that can only receive satisfaction from itself?

The appointed Sabbath came; the silence of expectation reigned in the synagogue as Baruch mounted the altar steps. What devil brought the image of Olympia at that moment before his mind so clearly that he heard her mocking tones, "Rabbi Baruch! Rabbi Baruch!" He summoned his resolution to banish all traces of the vision from his mind in such a time and place. He stood up as pale as a corpse, and dried the cold perspiration from his brow. All eyes were upon him. He began in a trembling voice:

“The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.” Ps. cxlv. 18. He represented in vivid colors the fate of the infidel, who had no God in Heaven, and none in his heart. He had come to the second part of his sermon, where he extolled the blessedness of the faith common to all men; he described the felicity of being even in life gathered to his fathers, united in the acceptation and building up of what was grounded by them; in this rests the strength of their earthly existence. His eloquence was fiery, his voice echoed powerfully, when he felt a violent choking sensation; he stopped, and blood flowed from his mouth into the damp handkerchief.

The stillness of a graveyard pervaded the whole assembly; the people looked at one another, and then pitifully at the fainting youth. The father had already opened his mouth to tell his son to come down, when Baruch stood up again and closed the service with a short prayer. As with one mouth the whole congregation cried out, “Jejasher Koach!” (the Lord strengthen thee) the usual applause in the synagogue.

Baruch and his father left the synagogue immediately. As they passed Chisdai’s seat, he asked kindly if he might accompany them. Baruch thanked him. In all quarters the Sabbath talk was of Baruch’s misfortune; old women and the wise-acres prophesied melancholy things. Only Chisdai,

usually not slow in his judgments, shrugged his shoulders when questioned. He had his reasons for not speaking out.

In three days Baruch again left his bed. He wished to go to Olympia.

"You shall never mention that house to me again," said his father in evident displeasure. "Fine tales I have heard of the little doctor. He is said to be the incarnation of Satan himself. The son of the indigo merchant, Grönhof, who died a week ago, confessed before his death that till then he had had no faith; the doctor had brought him to that pass. He has founded a whole sect. I did know the name; what is it called? But whether or no, you shall never cross his threshold again."

Baruch tried to dissuade his father, but he only went on: "The daughter is said to be worse than the father; she can talk the devil's ear off in seven different languages. I don't attend usually to common talk, but this lady is surrounded by a swarm of learned flatterers. Believe me, I know the world better than you; there all is jesting, laughter and song, witty dispute, rich fanciful ideas, in finely expressed trifling. A pure mind like yours sees nothing in it but the laudable freedom and gayety of the classic world. I have heard it called so too; but, properly looked at, it is frivolous mummery, that recognizes neither law nor limit. Have your parents left their fair native land for this—resign-



ing all glory and honor to endure mere sufferance—that now their children may fall into frivolous trifling with all that is most sacred? You know the writings of our religion better than I, but I have more experience of the world. Let me not have it in vain. Believe me, you will find dust and ashes if you give yourself up to the allurements of the world. Remain in the quiet sanctuary of sacred learning, and rejoice that you can live there undisturbed, as you proclaimed this day yourself.”

The father’s voice was deeply moved. Who knows how much lay behind these hastily uttered words? Transplanted to a strange soil he had aged rapidly. It seemed as if sorrow still oppressed him, that the fair native land, with its proud pleasures, had vanished forever for him. Perhaps for that reason he clung all the more to heavenly joys, and strove to bind his son to such alone.

The father’s existence was twofold. The rapturous sensations that had filled his soul when Baruch received rabbinical honors were a combination of religious exaltation and worldly pride. On that Sabbath he was another man than on the days of work. He had still to struggle against memories of the past, all the more since his wife had been torn from him; he strove continually, more than was apparently requisite, to live in the present, and external cares and sorrows oppressed him deeply. He was an exile; his own heart was never



free from the painful recollections of his home. He had left it for the sake of his faith and to ensure to his children freedom of worship. As it must be so, all the more zealously was he determined to watch over his son, that the peace of his life also might not be disturbed by strange reminiscences. The youth, whom the physician had warned against all violent speaking, tried, in a soft voice and carefully guarded language, to teach his father to think otherwise of Olympia and her friends. There was a knock at the door, and Oldenburg entered, accompanied by a friend. Oldenburg advanced and held out his hand to Baruch.

"That is well," he said; "you have not yet signed yourself a candidate for the lower world. We were anxious, because you gave us no information. Jufrow Olympia sends you her compliments; she remarked some time ago that you must be ill. So on her bidding I ventured to make my first call on you, and because I thought you must be seriously ill, I brought my friend Dr. Ludwig Meyer with me, who, moreover, has long wished to make your acquaintance."

"Yes, I was very anxious about my son," said his father, and Oldenburg bowed to the speaker.

"So you are the father of our young philosopher? Did you not come to me a short time ago about a claim on the house of Trost?"

"Yes."

“Excuse me for being so short then; I was engaged with pressing business. I was very sorry I did not tell you so. Your affair was not forgotten, however. I wrote to Bremen concerning it, and received answer that if you were not paid within four weeks an execution would be put in.”

“I am much obliged for your trouble, and for the honor you have done my house by this visit.”

Oldenburg then talked earnestly with the father, who felt himself, to his surprise, much taken with Oldenburg's open-hearted manner. It might be said that Oldenburg's whole behavior in tone and character was expressed in his voice, full, tranquil and trustworthy. He told the father that Baruch was the first Jew whom he had learned to know intimately. He was not only astonished at his powers of mind, and in love with his noble spirit; he was under obligations to him for having removed prejudices engrafted by early education and custom. Oldenburg's sincere and extraordinary affection for Baruch, never shown to him in words, was now revealed to his father, and made his countenance brighten with pleasure. The heart of the old Spaniard was stirred by the chivalric appearance of Oldenburg, whose grace was as a memory of his youth.

Meyer meanwhile conversed with Baruch on his breakdown of the previous Sabbath.

“You should have followed the example of our

rough-spoken, brave old Dr. Luther," said the young physician with the dark complexion and flashing black eyes.

"What did he do?" inquired Baruch.

"He once said: 'When I mount the pulpit I look at the human beings, but regard them as mere blocks standing before me, and speak out God's word.' In a certain sense—in which sense, however, he did not mean it—I agree with him entirely. You must study the man; he has a certain proportion of faith which is wanting in me, but he was thoroughly honest. I am much interested in him."

"I am glad you too are a theologian."

"I lead a sort of amphibious life between theology and medicine."

"Yes, Herr von Spinoza," said Oldenburg joining in the conversation. "Meyer has medicine for a wife, and theology for a mistress. You can dispute with him; he knows the Bible by heart." The father accompanied Oldenburg and Meyer to the door on their departure, and was not displeased that the passers-by should see who had visited him. His face was still bright when he returned to his son, and he said:

"Herr Oldenburg thinks very highly of you. I know the difference well enough between mere patronage and real sincerity. You may congratulate yourself on having such a gallant, upright man for a friend."

“And yet I must avoid him and his associates?” asked Baruch.

“I warned you,” concluded his father, “against underhand work; you are sharp-sighted enough now to see through such. I have nothing against your being with Oldenburg.”

Spinoza continued his visits to Olympia unhindered. He became more and more intimate with Oldenburg, while with Meyer their intellectual intercourse led, through their common zeal for study, to the same kind of intimacy which is brought about by travelling companionship, where, in the contemplation of the new and strange, they knew themselves to be in dear and trusted company. Meyer was, though in some respects shallow, well informed in modern speculation. The history of nations, the study of physical science, then followed with newly awakened zeal, above all, the Cartesian philosophy opened new fields of study with which Spinoza now made himself familiar. The “Letters” and the “Treatise on Mankind,” which had appeared posthumously, Descartes being then but lately dead, made his doctrine, just because of the light thrown on one so lately gone from life, all the more impressive, for traces of the breath of that life yet lay therein, and even philosophy, which should remain independent of all contemporary influences, has an inexplicably special power in the presence of its origin. The treatise of

Descartes on "Method" especially gave our young thinker more immediate insight, for Descartes here unites to the history of his own development the foundations of thought in general, and of his own system of philosophy in particular. Just this support from the individual facilitated his progress to the universal.

The studies and investigations of our young friend had hitherto merely been extended to the limits of what had been done, showing the limit of the territory illuminated by extinguished emotional life. His mind was turned to the movements that agitated the world around him. Human nature and its peculiarities, and the wide kingdom of the manifold forms of nature around us here, with its governing laws, must now be learned. Is it impossible? Must it not be possible to ascertain the movements of immutable human nature as well as under similarly fixed laws we understand the natural life around us? Is our knowledge merely a knowledge of the dead, of the dead around us and behind us? Is it not a knowledge of life alone? . . .

These were the questions to which his new studies led our young friend; a presentiment arose in him that he would be one of the first to fix the science of life. His friends were astonished by his affirming once in this sense that they who were aroused to real and conscious life must draw every-



thing from the living principle within them and around them, and that therein lay the meaning of the enigmatical expression of Christ (Mat. viii. 22), "Let the dead bury their dead." In thought and expression the expositions of Spinoza had something sacred and biblical, and this is exactly the spirit which penetrates to the origin of all life; the eternal word is his also, if even it arises in a new form and with a partially new signification. Oldenburg, as well as Meyer, was often surprised at Spinoza's "philosophical naïveté," as the former called it, while Meyer designated it "an intellectually clean tongue." There seemed to be a contradiction in speaking of "philosophical naïveté," and yet this formed the original foundation of free thought as defined by Spinoza. In nothing could he accept the ordinary or traditional point of view; his individual perceptions remained uninfluenced by the doctrines set before him. He grasped the things of the material as well as the ideal world in a wholly original and unbiassed manner as though they were originated in him; as if he were the first to comprehend this given external world as well as the inner life of intellect.





## CHAPTER XII.

### DISCIPLES OF DESCARTES.

SPINOZA and Oldenburg stood laughing at Meyer, who was playing with a ridiculously impish figure of glass in a long phial; it jumped up and down, and twisted about, as Meyer pressed the india-rubber stopper and declaimed magic incantations. He soon, however, ended the jest by remarking:

“Is philosophy from beginning to end anything more than this hollow imprisoned idea, the glass imp in the phial?” No one answered, and he continued, addressing Spinoza in particular: “What do you think of Descartes’ imp? Two thousand years ago the creator of such a wonder might have been the founder of a religion; his praise would have been chanted in hymns to the furthest corners of the earth, and all mankind would have entreated his aid.”

“That is very doubtful,” was the reply. “Without some new world-stirring idea no mere worker of miracles has made his name immortal. Descartes’ imp is nothing to the miracles the Jewish Cabbalists are said to have performed.”

“Tell us them,” said Meyer, while Oldenburg made a wry face as Spinoza began:

“In my father’s house we have an old servant named Chaje. She is German, and is full of the legends and superstitions of the German Jews. She once explained to me why at Prague on Friday evening they sing the hymn twice over by which Israel is united in mystic bonds of matrimony to the Sabbath. Once upon a time a great Cabbalist lived in Prague, called the Rabbi Löw. He made a human figure of clay, and left a small aperture in the lesser brain in which he laid a parchment with the unutterable name of God written on it. The clod immediately arose and was a man; he performed all the duties of a servant for his creator, he fetched water, and hewed wood. All through the Jews’ quarter he was known as the Golem of the great Rabbi Löw. Every Friday evening the Rabbi took the parchment out of his head, and he was clay until Sunday morning. Once the Rabbi forgot this duty. All were in the synagogue, the Sabbath hymn was begun, when all the women and children in the assembly started and screamed out, ‘The Golem ! the Golem is destroying everything !’ The Rabbi ordered the precentor to pause at the end of the prayer. It was yet possible to save all, but later naught would avail, the whole world would be destroyed. He hastened home, and saw the Golem already seizing the joists of his house

to tear down the building; he sprang forward, took the parchment out, and dead clay again lay at his feet. From that day they sang the Sabbath bridal song twice over in Prague. The great Rabbi Löw certainly never thought of Descartes, and yet his Golem had as much life as any man, if we are to accept the new view, that the union between soul and body is so slight that at any moment it can be disjoined, and again reunited."

Meyer did not seem to notice the argumentative conclusion, for he said:

"When I publish my correspondence between Adam and Eve, your Golem shall have an honorable position therein."

With evident displeasure Oldenburg turned to Spinoza.

"Meyer is perpetually hunting after strange stories, which he arranges and classifies like his beetles and butterflies. To my taste your legend savors of Jewish spleen. To let a destroyer of the world, the creation of a Cabbalist, loose on the Jews' quarter! If, after the free manner of the popular legends, he had a love affair with a maiden, who every Sabbath awaited him in vain, or had he been a grand vizier, or advanced to be some other great minister, whom his master could reduce to dust, and raise again at will, there would at least be either poetry or satire in the thing; as it is the Golem of our lord and master pleases me

much better. Look, his bows are so graceful that no dame of the court of Louis XIV. could excel them."

"Lord and master!" replied Spinoza; "that is too strong. I am neither his servant nor his pupil."

"What do I hear?" asked Meyer in astonishment. "How long is it since you began to study his system with me, and you already go beyond him, while I am only glad if I can understand him?"

"I fear for our friendship," interrupted Oldenburg. "You have so often said that a similarity of intellectual power must exist between friends, and I have never once been able to grasp the system. It was principally the astonishing externals that attracted me first to the new teaching of Descartes; I investigated the entrails of a calf with him willingly; he called it his library, and found surprising evidences therein; but to the vital principle of his philosophical system I never could attain. I bolted my door, I curtained my window, I sat down in a corner alone, and concentrated my mind on the book; for two or three sentences, for half an hour, even an hour, I followed him completely; then arose, without my knowing it, some strange thought between the lines: a former experience, a wish, above all, the memory of a girl whom I once fervently loved, intervened between the propositions, axioms, corollaries, and I saw at last that I wished to penetrate to the foundation of things, and yet could

not distract myself from every-day life. I laid the book down and took another, or went out and dissipated my vexation and my cares."

"How is it then that you pass for so enthusiastic a disciple of Descartes, and sometimes are really such?"

"I must go rather far back for that. In the first place I am mostly a Cartesian, because I have gone through much the same career of doubt as the founder of the school. My father was pastor of the place where I was born; from childhood I sat in his library and read everything. Witch legends, history, anatomy, alchemy and theology, all came alike to me if I had something to read. When I was older, this miscellaneous knowledge mixed and fermented in my brain; religious doubts intervened; in nothing and in no occupation could I find any real pleasure. After my father's death, to the great scandal of the worthy citizens of my native town, I led a somewhat loose life, but that did not amuse me long. I tied up my bundle and followed the banners of Gustavus Adolphus as a volunteer. I was employed as commissioner to raise the contributions demanded by the Swedish host from my native town, and so gained considerable importance among my fellow citizens. The trade of war, for it was nothing more, soon wearied me. In camp and on the march doubts of all the faiths, for whose differences men fought so bloodily, overtook me. It was



continual murder for no one knows what. The most superstitious of all popular ideas, that of bravery, alone made its value felt on its own merits. As Hugo Grotius says, towns and countries became as corpses, that men might no longer grieve for the fate of individuals. I long doubted whether I did right or not; a trivial circumstance at last decided me. I took my leave and went to the University of Utrecht. The students and professors there were divided into two parties; you can imagine that I did not hesitate long in ranking myself against the pious pastor, Gisbert Vötius, and on the side of Regius. He taught the new philosophy of Descartes. I was then twenty-one years of age, full of arrogance and restless energy, and as I had made something of a name as a swordsman I soon won a certain amount of authority among the students."

"Yes, I can assure you," interrupted Meyer, "I have faithfully seconded Oldenburg when he enforced the belief on the Vötiusians that they were predestined to have circumflex accents and all other marks of Cain written on their brows by us."

"What a much more active youth you had than I," sighed Spinoza.

"That is the question," answered Meyer, and Oldenburg resumed his narration.

"As Regius became more and more bitterly persecuted by Vötius the father and son, without the spirit, we went one evening to the house of his Ex-



cellency and set up some cat's music there. I was expelled as a ringleader; Meyer slipped through with a whole head; so I was a martyr for a doctrine which, as I saw later, Regius himself did not rightly understand. I wandered about Holland and stayed for some months with Descartes himself. I know nearly every sentence of his doctrine, but I never could acquire the penetrative contemplativeness necessary to follow this germ through all its trellis work of development to the lattice of mathematical certainty."

"It is often so with me too," said Meyer; "I returned from my philosophical pilgrimage, on which I would conquer the Holy Sepulchre, wrong-side up, or, as our proverb says, 'feet foremost.'"

"Oldenburg has described the struggle better as one for contemplative power," replied Spinoza. "Look around; here, there and everywhere you see illusion and error. What assurance have you that all you see, all you know by experience, and feel in your heart is aught else than illusion and deception? What is so firmly and deeply founded that it cannot be torn up by doubts? So you close your eyes, cut loose from all your surroundings, and then, thus isolated, the whole visible world is cast into nonentity; you yourself perhaps a nonentity too? How do you know that you really exist? Here you are at the end of doubt, and here a still, small voice cries to you, 'I, I am, for I think, I

doubt my being; I, the thought, the doubt within me, I exist, even if all around me disappear in illusion and shadow.' Begin with doubt and you can stop at no arbitrary resting-place. Why doubt only the higher spiritual things? Has the physical world greater certainty because it is apparent to the senses? Are the deceptions of our senses more numerous than the illusions of our hearts and imaginations? Can you not imagine yourself a purely spiritual being. Can you not lay aside as prejudice all that hitherto appeared certainty, for example, the existence of your body? If not, you will strive in vain after incontrovertible truth. Can you do it, however. Then, if you have penetrated the central point of your self-consciousness, then forward! Open your eyes; let everything come before them that was hitherto confined to your thoughts; let nothing remain unexamined. You have a measure of the truth and existence of everything: what seems to you as incontrovertible as your knowledge of your own self, that alone is truth."

"I understand you," said Meyer. "You arrive at the fundamental axiom of the ancients, 'Man is the measure of all things.' The inner man as well as the outer man is a foot-rule, as we place the figures of men in pictures to show dimensions by contrast. Man is the ideal, universally accepted yard measure for the world."

"But if any spoke with further skepticism," inter-

rupted Oldenburg. "I have no perfect assurance of that fundamental truth which should serve me as a rule, and I still do not know whether any inner intelligence dwells in me or not?"

"Either such an one would speak against his own consciousness, or we must believe that there are men who, by birth or prejudice, that is, through outward circumstances, are spiritually blind. For such do not think about themselves; whether they agree with or doubt anything, they do not know what they do; they say they do not know, and then even do not know that they do not know. They do not say it absolutely, for they are afraid to recognize their existence as know-nothings, so they must remain silent if they will not recognize anything that yet comprises a truth. In short, with such it is impossible to speak of knowledge, for in daily life and intercourse they are obliged to recognize of necessity that they exist, that they use their judgment, and witness on oath in favor of one and against another. But if anything is proved to them, they do not know whether the proof is there; deny, agree with, or dispute, they know naught of it; they are soulless automatons. For reasonable men, however, proof lies in the spiritual eyes. We can see the unseen things, which are but the objects of our thoughts, with no other eyes than with these proofs."

"You are becoming quite enthusiastic," said

Meyer. "Lucian disposed of the whole in a jest by making a radical doubter be sold as a slave, and still doubt under the lash of slavery."

"But what does Descartes mean," asked Oldenburg, "by his unprofitable dicing with quadrangles, triangles, and the devil knows what angles?"

"Mathematical proof," answered Meyer, "is alone admissible. The definitions are the exact representations of an object described with its name and attributes; the postulates and axioms by which the proposition is proved are such truisms that whoever knows the alphabet must see them."

"You must come yet nearer, and be yet more definite," interposed Spinoza. "Definitions merely affirm the essence of a thing; attributes cannot be learned by definitions, they must be learned by experience. By mathematical laws alone can we understand and follow up all things, all processes of both the external and internal world. Everything is the necessary and inevitable result of its primal cause. Mathematical truths alone have the same inherent necessity and external evidence as our consciousness of ourselves. By the same means that I know certainly that I am, I also know that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. The intricacies of higher mathematical problems make no difference, for they all rest on the same simple and incontrovertible principles, and every link of their necessary progress is as in-

controvertible as the principle itself. A number, as such, is the earliest definite idea; it is without regard to the characteristics of things, and merely includes their existence. Apples, trees, men and beasts are all included. Larger growth does not increase the number, but draws from the first abstract idea a second, and letters are set in the place of numbers. The individual objects now lie far apart, but at all times we must be prepared to retrace their origin. To the building up of the whole intelligence, however, this would be a hindrance; here we have only to deal with pure thought—”

“And he who gets dizzy over it let him remain on the ground,” jestingly interrupted Meyer. And Oldenburg inquired:

“Do you believe in the possibility of mathematical psychology?”

“Call it so if you like,” continued Spinoza; “the conditions and laws of action of our intelligence and sensations have as definite rules as anything in nature; they are as ascertainable, they must be so; all that prevents us from being so to ourselves is—”

“And custom and passion put a stroke through the calculation,” interposed Meyer. “In you Descartes is a second time *Renatus*.\* If the master

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\* Descartes' Christian name was Renatus, and this pun is in a poem prefixed to the first work of Spinoza, which was edited and prefaced by Ludwig Meyer.



called the inside of a calf his library, you have a much better. You have learned the weapons of both sides in the enemy's camp. The Jesuit school educated and inspired Descartes—the Talmud school you. What wonderful ways hath history! But you will go further yet. I see you with a broom at the mast-head, like our Admiral Tromp, sailing the ocean, as a sign that you have cleared the elements of life of arbitrary prejudices."

Spinoza entered into the jesting humor of his friend, only so far pursuing his object as to explain that even this stroke through the calculation must be an effect of the same cause; that the passions must not be regarded as exceptional, but recognized as natural laws. Meyer tried in all ways to analyze Spinoza's intellectual method, and bent on this study he came again to talk with him.

"I have been thinking," he said to him one day, "of what you once said to me about the study of the Talmud, and think I understand how it is that you Jews can clamber up and down such intellectual ladders; if you jump over two or three rounds you do not miss your footing. It all comes by studying the Talmud, which accustoms you so early to free intellectual gymnastics. We, however—I can only use myself for an example—we were very differently trained. If one of us bring a thought into the world the midwives of the catechism come, and in accordance with immemorial



custom and manipulation, the embryo is brought to light, then it is wrapped in cotton-wool and tied into a pillow that it may not freeze, and when it is older goes in leading strings."

"I know your methods of education too little," replied Spinoza, "and so cannot rightly understand how a religion with a dogmatic-historic basis can be developed in a Socratic manner; but what you say of the Jews may be true enough. It has often happened that, like David, they have overthrown a champion well armed and practised in rules of fence with a well-directed pebble; but this want of discipline destroys all true, well-founded learning among the Jews. My endeavor is to withdraw myself from that vagabond intellectual life, and follow the progress of a study from point to point. Herein Descartes is my surest leader."

How wonderful it is that the thousand buds on a tree open at once! They are but one flower-cup, and the innumerable trees but one blooming tree, but to the eyes of men they are thousands. So bloom the flowers in the heart of man. It is but one force that awakens our intelligence, will, benevolence and love; we, however, can only see them individually.

The kingdom of knowledge and the joys of friendship awoke in Spinoza together; indeed, they were but one; for knowledge is the joyful recognition of external laws, the endeavor after, and con-

sciousness of agreement with them; and friendship is the living practice of them in more defined form, impelling us by the same forces.

Yet a third powerful influence worked on Spinoza which he dared not name to himself.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE NEW ALLY.

OLYMPIA sat at the window and looked in the window seat mirror, the so-called "spy," a standing evidence of Dutch love of comfort and sight-seeing. A young man stood by the lady. He was of middle height; his oval face, when seen in profile, might have been called handsome; it had some resemblance to Olympia's, but there was none of the restless fire in his glance that shone from Olympia's eyes. His left hand rested on the gilt handle of his rapier, and with his right he stroked his blonde whiskers. Every now and then he screwed up his eyes and looked out of the corners at every point in his costume. It was all faultless: the white cravat was in its proper position, the black mantle of finest Venetian velvet fell in majestic folds, and the tassel of gold thread hung gracefully on his breast, the quilted satin breeches were tied ornamentally at the knees, the silk stockings, and shoes with gold buckles, all were irreproachable. "Look there," said Olympia, and the well-dressed individual looked at her amiably; "do you see that young man who is coming so thoughtfully down the street?"

The person addressed quickly drew a red morocco case from his pocket, and took a jewelled opera-glass from it.

“Do you mean that one?” he then said. “He is of middle height and brown complexion; is he not a Jew?”

“Whatever he is,” replied Olympia, “he comes of an honorable Spanish family. My father respects him highly, and I—I consider him one of my dearest friends. Just because he was born a Jew, whom the whole world is against, he has attained to an unprejudiced conscientiousness of judgment, an unswerving rectitude, which command our regard, and often put us to shame.”

“But what do you say to my physiognomical guess?” continued the stranger as he curled his moustache round his first finger, and let his glance wander complacently to the window-glass in which he saw himself reflected. “I too find the Jews very interesting; they are a sort of historical relic, and I have to thank you for my taste for history. I look upon the Jews as a fragment of some Asiatic root which we can study in this strange form.”

“Had you much intercourse with Jews in Hamburg?” inquired Olympia.

“You jest,” was the reply, “but I know the Jews thoroughly. *En détail*, there may be many honorable men among them. In my native town there was an old rogue to whom I used to sell my old

clothes. I had many a joke with him; he took everything in good part if he could make a good bargain; covetous as he was, I have still seen several instances of his uprightness; but looked at *en gros* all Jews are pickpockets; a dirty, disgusting lot, who, alas! my father has often said, will soon have all the trade of our town to themselves. Only think! I had a friend staying with me once who actually condescended to a noble passion for a Jewess, so much so, indeed, that he actually thought of uniting himself to his Rachel. I cannot yet understand how a man of honorable family could bear to have a dirty Jew for a brother-in-law smelling of leeks. But the maiden appears to have been educated above her greasy locked compatriots. One morning my friend was in Cuxhaven when they were dragging a corpse out of the water. He recognized it as Rachel. We had to hold him to prevent him from doing himself a mischief. I was right sorry for my friend's trouble. He swore hard and fast that he would never belong to another, but one knows what those vows are. He recovered sooner than we expected, and in a year he was the happy spouse of a town councillor's daughter. When we remind him of his earlier passion he only laughs quietly. Surely Jufrow Olympia either jests or plays with paradoxes when she honors a Jew with the enviable title of her best friend."

During this discourse Olympia had placed her-

self at the organ and lightly played a prelude. She looked quietly at the stranger, who emphasized his words and beat time with his thumb and finger, which he had passed through a ring.

"You have gained much experience of life," she said at last, "but you forget that you are in Holland, where religions are not divided into dominant and subordinate. I believe Amsterdam is the only town in the world which has carried toleration so far that Christians have been converted to Judaism. You must be acquainted with de Spinoza; believe me, he is a remarkable man. You are not ill-natured; be friendly with him for my sake. But hush! here he comes."

Spinoza entered.

"Here is Herr Kerkering at last," said Olympia, "of whom I have often spoken to you as my pupil of years ago, and who was prevented from returning to us by his father's death."

"You will assuredly approve of my resolution, Herr de Spinoza," interrupted Kerkering, "to return again to Jufrow Olympia, and hear the wisdom of the ancients from her honeyed lips."

"A questionable compliment," replied Olympia; "you say I have yellow lips, and remind me of my age." Kerkering protested. Spinoza helped him out by saying:

"You have probably forgotten, Herr Kerkering, that Jufrow Olympia demands, like the highest



Being, that we should make no image of her of things heavenly or earthly."

"O you heretic!" said Olympia, and her flashing eyes seemed indeed capable of an *auto-da-fé*. "You will surely permit Herr Kerkering," she continued after a pause, "to join our Latin conversations. I cannot call them lessons now."

Spinoza agreed, and while he was speaking Oldenburg entered. He looked Kerkering over, as Olympia introduced him, with a rapid glance.

"I thought I should meet thee here," he said turning to Spinoza, "and so spared myself the journey to thy house."

"Thou?" said Olympia. "Oh, the cordial *thou!* how lucky men are that they can address their friends so when they please without hesitation. The Romans little knew their good fortune in addressing each other as thou. I am proud that you two are already so intimate, as I was the means of it."

"If two quantities are equal to a third then the three are equal," jested Spinoza.

"And not a fourth also?" inquired Olympia. "We are here the representatives of four great powers; we will conclude a quadruple alliance. You must represent Moses, Herr von Spinoza; you Calvin, Herr Oldenburg; Herr Kerkering, you must stand up for your Luther, and I—I will represent the Pope; he cannot object, for I am called Olympia

Maria Honoria. Herr Kerkering, give the two gentlemen your hands. We have long been allies; we four will represent the circle which includes and reconciles all religious differences."

"I am afraid that is the reverse problem of the squaring of the circle," said Oldenburg as he joined them, and added, "You go even further than Hugo Grotius, who also dreamed of an eternal Peace of the Religions, but forgot the Jews in his projected union."

Olympia took Kerkering's hands and placed them in the hands of the two friends.

"Always extravagant and arbitrary!" said Oldenburg to Spinoza, as they went away. "Women never can resist match-making; if they are married, they try to find similar good fortune for others; if they have one friend, another must be his friend also, even if by force. What has this Kerkering, whom she treats like an automaton, to do with us?"

"You should not be so discontented with such alliances," replied Spinoza; "it is another example for your lord and master, Descartes. Without the perpetual external interference of a higher third element no real existence can be imagined; all would fall to pieces."

## CHAPTER XIV.

### HANDICRAFT.

WHILE Spinoza was absorbed in consideration of the actual existence of things, the inherent cause of their existence, their necessary and accidental destinies, and the appropriate mathematical demonstrations of Descartes, his father had also been considering the sufficient cause of actual existence, and his demonstrations were not less founded on ciphers and numbers than the philosopher's.

"Are you still resolved not to be a Rabbi?" he said one day to his son. "Have you thought over all the consequences to both you and me? I, alas! see my greatest joy sink before me into the grave."

"In the sayings of the Fathers it is written," answered Baruch in a low voice, "that Rabbi Zadok said, 'Make not a crown of glory of thy knowledge of the sacred law to pride thyself thereon, neither make a spade thereof wherewith to dig.' It always goes ill with a religion if its expounders earn wages thereby."

"Good, I am of Rabbi Zadok's opinion; but what if a man hath no other spade? Listen to me; I will be open with you. Our Miriam is now the

betrotted of Samuel Casseres; he wishes, with Rebecca's husband, to enlarge the diamond mill; he has fresh secrets. My daughters are now, with God's help, taken care of; you alone remain. Should I have concealments from you? My lawsuit is going against me, and what I have to leave you at my death is so little that you could not live on it. May God preserve my children and my children's children from saying with sorrow in their daily prayers, 'Lord, let us not be bounden to them of flesh and blood for alms!' So tell me what is to be done?"

"Must I go into trade?"

"No, I should never agree to that; from childhood up you have had no inclination for trade. Now, indeed, there are new channels for commerce, and we need not be so confined as we are in Holland here, where each one snaps the opportunity from before the other's face. There is no use in going to Batavia, for it goes so ill with those that are there that many wish to return; but there is a report that Rabbi Manasseh Ben Israel, who is treating with the Lord Protector, may probably obtain leave for the Jews to go to England again."

"I heard of it," answered Baruch. "Rabbi Manasseh won most votes by saying that the true coming of the Messiah could not be until the fulfilment of the prophecy that the Jews would be

scattered through all lands. It was a sophistical trick."

"That may be," said his father, "the greater proportion of people cannot be treated any other way than by being duped, so we do them that favor. But that is not what concerns us. Consider how you are to ensure a livelihood in the future."

"Rabbi Gamaliel teaches that 'Study of the law united with a trade is good; diligence in both causes us to forget sin; study without work is idleness, and leads to sin.'" Baruch then gave several examples of fathers of the synagogue who were handicraftsmen, and concluded with the words, "I should like to learn a handicraft."

"You need not quote the Talmud so much for it; I have nothing against your learning an honorable craft."

Spinoza was glad that his father was not merely moved by his examples to agree to his purpose, for he had in a measure thereby lent himself to well-known "pious deceptions." He was firmly resolved never to join in the usual routine, and sell his knowledge and convictions for daily bread. If he could earn his livelihood by the labor of his hands, his convictions would remain free from the necessities and constraints of every-day life. Or even to minds of the first order does that vague, unsatisfied longing occur, which so often comes over us if we are fated always and always to drive the pen,

to inspire dead words, and dig out and chisel new thoughts and feelings? Do they feel that irresistible need for physical exercise to restore the overstrained nerve power?

Our young friend found plentiful consideration in the decision as to what handicraft he would devote himself to. He now remembered how often he had stood near the diamond mill, and watched the horses in the lower story as they turned the wheel that set in motion the machinery in the mill above. The polishing and cutting of diamonds was the secret of his co-religionists, an attraction for the boy, as well as the knowledge, freely entrusted to him, that diamonds could only be cut and polished with diamond dust. How often, on his way to the Talmud school, or Magister Nigritius, had he stood in self-forgetfulness at the open doors or windows of the workshops while the men inside pursued their trade. The boy's eyes had been fascinated by this handicraft, and a longing for similar work possessed his mind. Now for the first time the knowledge flashed upon him that what we call a free decision is really only the result of past influences, often generating again its own scarcely perceptible results. He paused but little to consider this fleeting thought, for his imagination dwelt on the numerous workshops wherein the powers of man build up and mould the results of nature into new shapes. Only he who reforms and controls



the materials of life has received true life. What a thousandfold blessing lies in work itself, as well as in its results. One hand clasps the other, and one thought runs into another in the imagination of its effects. The whole activity of man forms one immense fraternal workshop. Here, too, however, one individual has forcibly separated from another, and as the churches had done in the kingdom of thought and feeling, so had the guilds in the handicrafts of their chosen companies. There was no legal prohibition excluding the Jews from any trade, but custom and convenience made the guild-masters exclusive and reluctant.

Again it was Descartes from whom Spinoza received the decisive impulse towards his object. Spinoza was studying the "Dioptrika" of Descartes, and there learned for the first time the law of refraction, and the first correct explanation of the rainbow. The objection raised by Huyghens, and universally shared, that Descartes had taken the law from the manuscript of Snellius, then widely circulated through Holland, and had learned the explanation of the rainbow from Antonio de Dominis and Kepler, without acknowledging either, all this appeared trivial to our young inquirer; but it disturbed him to think that deception should exist even in the domain of intellect. The otherwise enigmatical saying of the Talmud, "Whoever reveals a word or thought in the name of its author, he

brings salvation to the world," now appeared to him a law of truth.

This proceeding of Descartes, if inexcusable, was still explicable in that he was accustomed as a courtier to find himself with easy adaptability among the strange and objective, and to regard it easily as his own and subjective.

It was with pure enthusiasm that the determination took firm hold of Spinoza to owe his livelihood solely to his own activity; to owe it to no inheritance, and in the same manner to find the truth by his own intellect.

One day Spinoza explained to his father that he wished to learn the art of making optical glasses.

"But that is a trade that barely feeds a man," replied his father; "how can you support a family on it? Or do you intend our honorable name to die out with you?"

Spinoza did not answer this remonstrance immediately; perhaps he hoped and expected to perpetuate the name in another manner. He had touched a painful chord in his father's mind, and while explaining his inclination for independence he remarked that a Rabbi, by his salary as well as by grateful offerings, was but a servant of individuals. Mingled melancholy and pride was on the face of the father at this statement; he nodded assentingly. The old Spaniard recognized in his son the same proud spirit which was not yet dead in himself. If

a man cannot win from society respect and power, it is as well to avoid it, and in seclusion lose all care for it. So it seemed to the father; and again we see the loosened foundations and singular mixture of circumstances that awoke the powers of Spinoza to their full bloom.

“As far as I am concerned,” the father agreed at last, “having thought over all the trades, I can think of none better if one has no great capital.”

Father and son went to the skilful and well-known master, Christian Huyghens, an uncle of the mathematical scholar of that name, but who seemed to have neither the poetical genius of his brother, nor that of his nephew.

Spinoza explained to the master, in the course of conversation, that he already knew the laws of optics, and had also considerable acquaintance with mathematics; he then inquired if it were possible to learn the handiwork in half a year. The master, who, till then, had listened quietly to all remarks, sprang up at this so violently that his spectacles dropped from his nose.

“The deuce you can! May I turn Catholic, what maggots the youth of this day have in their heads!” he cried. “I have been seven and forty years in the business, and I may say I understand it, and can teach it to others; but I have people in the workshop who have already been five and seven years at it, and if I lay a microscope down there may I eat

it as it stands if any one of them can put it together as it ought to be. You think you can learn everything out of books. I would not give a snap for all your histories; paper is patient, and lets you print what you like on it. I once tried to make a microscope after a description as it stood in the book, but it was good for nothing. Whoever is not in the business himself will never know as long as he lives how to bring the right focus into the glass. Go away with your learned disquisitions!" The master's wife came in; she had the pincers in her hand, and flourished the instrument violently.

"Yes," she cried; "if they could only learn how in a trice, every ignoramus would come here and turn optician in less than no time."

It was no little trouble to pacify the good folks again.

"I am a man like a lamb," then said the master; "if you cannot get on with me you will never get on with any one in this world."

"Yes, he is only too good to the people," interrupted his wife, "and what he wastes on other people I have to make up for."

"Never mind," said the master; "you take good care of yourself; but I will be honest with you, you shall not have it to say later that I kept anything back from you. In the first place, it is an unhealthy trade. Look at me, see what I am; I have already swallowed more than three hundredweight of glass.

I know I shall not last much longer. God's will be done!"

"Don't belie yourself, Christian," interrupted his wife; "if one is as strong as that in the sixties, and for three years has not paid the doctor or the apothecary a farthing, I think one may thank God. You must not believe all he says."

"Let me speak, I know what I am saying," retorted the master, trying to give himself an air of importance. He first clasped his little finger round the ring-finger of his left hand, then said, "Secondly, it is a poor trade; you get nothing by it."

"Yes, yes, he is right there," commented his wife. "When we began business we and the late Greenwood, who lived by the Town Hall that is burned down, were the only two, and there are twenty-three in the town now; we hardly earn water enough for soup, and the worst of it is we cannot for shame give up the business. We are two old people and do not need much; with scraping and saving we manage to pull through, so that at the end of the year we still keep our things together. I don't know how folks get on with a house full of children, living on scanty wages."

His father, moved by these representations, would have retracted his consent, but Spinoza stood firm; so they came to an agreement with the master that, for a moderate premium, Spinoza should learn as long from him as he pleased.



Such was the wholly new atmosphere, one filled with the smell of pitch and glass dust, into which Spinoza now entered. Henceforward he spent the greater part of the day in the workshop. He learned to handle the sharp diamond set in one leg of a compass, to cut pieces of a certain size out of panes, the pieces still keeping their crystal facets when split. Spinoza then entered on the first grade of the honorable art of polishing. The cut piece was fixed on a vise with pitch, this fixed to a lever, and a wheel worked with the right foot. A strap was fastened round this and to a roller, on which was fixed a perfectly smooth plate of lead. The plate turned, and with the left hand the fragment of glass was pressed against it, thus inscribing successive circles on it until the glass received the required form. Wet sand must be continually scattered over it to avoid setting the hard material on fire by friction, and to increase the roughness of the lead. The first stage was then finished. Spinoza would have preferred a less troublesome and, above all, a cleaner handicraft; but it was just these additions to his work which became his intellectual means to further penetration of the laws of existence. Men are much inclined to regard apparently rough and repulsive labors as inferior. Spinoza accustomed himself to regard the circumstances of life, not according to their popular estimation, but on the essential grounds of their



existence. The work is but unclean from one point of view; while engaged in it the workman is covered with dust and sand, but its aim is the highest degree of purity and cleanliness. At the second stage it was decided whether the smooth glass was to receive a concave or a convex form, and a concave or convex brass plate accordingly fixed on the cylinder; a screw was fixed alternately on either glass with pitch, and this by means of a peg turned round on the brass plate, on which the same movement as in the first stage was employed. Meanwhile the fine sand, now ground to polishing dust, must be spread on the plate by means of a brush, and water from the tin can near spurted out of the mouth on to the plate. After the two sides were so prepared the third stage was proceeded to; the brass plate was made hot, a drilled hole on the wrong side smeared with cement, covered on the right side with so-called *caput mortuum* (oxyd of iron), water being still sprinkled continually on it, and the glass thus polished. The glass having passed through the three stages of cutting, smoothing and polishing, so that neither crack nor flaw was discoverable, was perfect.

Spinoza soon mastered the mechanical difficulties, and the first glass that he perfected without extraneous aid from its roughest state to the satisfaction of the master made his eyes light up with pleasure. The sight of the perfected work was a

double gratification, gratification that the raw material was perfected to its end, and gratification to the mind of the workman that the raw material bore the impress of his will.

He understood the mathematical calculation of the glasses and their combination sooner than the master had expected. The books must have contained something more than mere nonsense.

While Spinoza chipped glasses for the short and weak-sighted, to bring the distant near, and the near nearer, he worked out in his mind the finest optical problems to clear and strengthen the mind's eyes of his contemporaries and successors. He was glad that the continual whirring allowed but short intervals of intercourse with his comrades; he could thus follow his own thoughts undisturbed.

There was one merry fellow in the workshop, with finely cut, handsome features, and rough, curly brown hair; he always sang and laughed as he pushed the door open, for he went on crutches, having club feet. While he placed his crutches near, and, rolling his shirt-sleeves up, put his lathe in order—he worked it in a way of his own with his knees—he regularly treated his fellow-workmen to a speech. Once he said: "Am I not better off than King Nebuchadnezzar? He, I believe, had earthen feet, and could never have stumbled over our bad pavements. I have pulled the arms out of a tree and made myself feet thereof; the next time

an eagle flies between my legs I will pull his wings out and sew them on me. I have a right to ask wings from our Lord God. Why has he given me feet I cannot use? Brethren, it would be all up then; you might keep St. Monday five days in the week; you would want no more telescopes. Does any learned gentleman want to know what a star looks like? Here I am, Mr. Peter Blyning, at your service; for a good tip I will fly up and spy it all out for you. Perhaps I might stay up there and come down no more. If a pretty moon maiden would marry me I should be quite willing; down here I must die a bachelor."

A peal of laughter always followed his words, and he took every opportunity of treating them to his oratory.

"After all, as things are, we are all crutch makers; what our Lord and God has bungled over we have to set to rights. If he had stuck better eyes in the folks we need have no telescopes and no spectacles. May God forgive me! but I am often right down angry with him. What have I done to him that he should send me into the world half made? If he does not give me better feet up there he may keep his eternal life to himself. I'll none of it."

They all stared at him with blank faces when he spoke like this. Spinoza alone tried to show him that physical pains and imperfections are not real evils; and that it is a man's highest vocation to lead

well the life God has allotted to him, and not to pine for powers denied to us by nature, for in so doing we shall never attain to true peace of mind.

“Yes, you have spoken well,” said Peter, and his voice had a melancholy tremble in its tones; “you have spoken well, but do I demand more than belongs to me by right as a man? Look here; if but for once in my life I could dance I swear I should be ready to go to my grave in peace. When I hear dance-music, nay, even now, this moment, when I only think of it, I think I could jump out of my skin with rage; I could tear my eyes out; and shame on me! but I have drunk myself often enough blind drunk, because I was afraid the people all the while might see me crying.”

Spinoza strove to soothe Peter; he won his good will, so that he was occasionally shown how to handle his work by him; but our philosopher, in the midst of his discourse, was often aware how infinitely difficult it is to descend from the heights of ideal generalities to daily needs and the questions of ordinary men.

The rumor spread through the workshop that Spinoza was a great scholar. His companions were proud of their apprentice, and boasted of him in the ale-house; but in their behavior to Spinoza himself they gave him plainly to understand that he was only a Jew, and took certain airs of superior birth and familiar condescension with regard to

him. Conquering all sensitiveness, Spinoza only noticed the latter, and his gentle yet self-possessed manner turned off all rudeness; his companions soon acquired a certain half unwilling respect for Spinoza. A short, impressive sentence spoken by him often worked long in the minds of those who heard it. Master Huyghens, and his wife too, soon became fond of the modest, quiet young man. These were not shepherds and fishermen, not men of simple life in continual intercourse with eternal nature, with whom he could live like the wise of old, enriching and widening his own intelligence. It was a world whose activity lay far from aboriginal simplicity; whose inhabitants spent their days in every imaginable noise; on whose minds even on holidays it was difficult to impress a word. But by the rushing brook or the whirring wheel the souls of men are as alike as the winds that carry the different waves of sound, and the priesthood that serves the eternal laws must be perpetually renewed. As in nature each plant shoots upward, it lives for itself alone, and yet to the minds of men it seems to open and close with the greatest uniformity; so the activity of mankind is divided into different callings, each man being devoted to one in particular, and striving to fulfil it; but to the thinking mind all are united in the working of one great machine. Spinoza felt especially glad to stand in the ranks of those who earn their daily bread by



the labor of their hands. For all thus engaged quietly fulfil the requirements of the law of their nature. Work is the attribute of man; he fulfils the law in employing himself of his own free will; and it is a great and glorious chorus that comprises all the teaching and writing, the hammering and digging, the drilling and boiling in the individual workshops of the universe, and what results therefrom. The quiet life of nature is mere existence; intelligence is thought; work is existence and thought united.

Spinoza was sociable, gay and contented.

Not so Olympia when he described his new way of life to her.

"I am glad we agree in one thing," she said; "that to spend the livelong day in brooding over the thought of others is either too much or too little work; so much so that it becomes tiresome to me, and I am glad to count my stitches again. When I am sewing my best thoughts come. Do you see that garland of roses? Legends as foolish and extravagant as those of the *Gesta Romanorum* are imprisoned in those stitches. Ah! how glad I was then that I knew some handicraft."

"But I do not work merely to do something with my hands, but to give my teeth something to chew."

"I have noticed for a long time," replied Olympia, "that reading Tacitus has made you quite humorous."



"I was not aware of it, but I am in sober earnest, that, for the future, I must earn my own livelihood."

"What did you acquire so much learning for then? Not for mere vanity, I hope? My father will enlarge his Institute, and you shall be a head-master in it; will you not be my colleague?"

"I am sorry to say, No. You may call it egotism, but my first duties are to myself, and I must first be clear of these; then, if I can teach anything that would be of service to mankind I will think of it; but neither now, nor ever, will I sell the smallest of my convictions for material good."

"You always appear like a *Deus ex machina*," said Olympia to Oldenburg, as he entered. "Do you know that your god-child is preparing to be a master-craftsman?"

"An apostle to all lands, rather, you would say," replied Oldenburg.

"If it were only some pursuit," continued Olympia, "such as the learned men and statesmen of old times followed, like agriculture, I should not have minded so much; there was something great in making extremes meet, and doing with the most cultivated minds the work of the rudest aborigines; even fishing and carpentering have something poetical in them; but to polish glass in an obscure room cramps and stupefies body and soul. It sets my teeth on edge to think of glass

polishing. The hand of a philosopher turning the wheel of a machine, and employed in stupid manufacture; it is too repulsive a thought !”

“Do not abuse handicraft,” replied Spinoza earnestly, “it is a privilege of humanity. The beasts have only their instinctive faculties of work, to build their nests, obtain their nourishment, to attack and to defend. Mankind has made the external productions of nature his limbs. If he wants the flight of birds, the speed of deer, arrow and ball will overtake either. His hands can with difficulty dig up the earth; he melts iron and points it as hatchet or plough, yokes the strength of beasts to it, and carves and shapes both wood and stone. The peaceful crafts of shaping and building are the noblest inheritance of mankind, are sacred traditions. Whoever leaves an improved tool to posterity gives a helping hand, and here a thousand immortal minds work on in obscurity. If I could in thought or deed invent something that would serve men after me in the enlightenment and beautifying of life, I should be happy; but never must we forget that all that is so handed down is but a tool for our own formation.”

“That is all very fine and witty,” said Olympia, womanlike seizing one thought out of the whole to reply to; “every one can think that, without being an artisan himself. Why should you work with sacred axes, sacred hatchets, and sacred files?”

“Because, to answer in your own way, I am cumbered with a sacred body, that requires food; and with the handicraft I have chosen I will demonstrate the whole theory of dialectics to you: Two concave glasses laid on one another show the object at which you look through them upside down, the reflecting glass between brings it again into its right position.”

“When were you born?” interrupted Oldenburg.

“A strange question, Sir Godfather,” replied Spinoza, “if you do not yet know, in November of the year 1632.”

“That is excellent,” continued Oldenburg; “did you never hear of the Görlitz Apostle who raved in perpetual apostolic ecstasies? On November, '24, he departed this life. He was by trade an honorable shoemaker, and I will show you from the Apocalypse that, seven years after his death, a new philosopher must be born, also a handicraftsman.”

“Your comparison limps,” said Olympia, “for your Jacob Böhme was a shoemaker, and became a philosopher, while our Maledict, from a philosopher became a handicraftsman.”

“Excuse me,” said Spinoza; “the jest does not limp, but has a leg too many, for there are eight years between 24 and 32.”

“That does not matter,” answered Oldenburg, “if you amputate a year. But in truth and earnest, you offend your friends by the aim to which you

are devoting your life; the case is so clear to me that I can not only speak before our friend, but before every one. Have you not declared to me yourself that among friends everything is in common? Are we so ethereal that we can only exchange words and feelings, and not clinking gold?"

"I know your generous heart, and you know I thereby thank you," replied Spinoza; "but I have already told you that I will never receive a gift from a friend, as long as I can work for my living with my hands."

Spinoza was not to be dissuaded from diligently following his trade.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE UNEXPRESSED.

“HOW do you like Kerkering?” inquired Olympia one day when he did not come to the lesson.

“As you do,” retorted Spinoza.

“You build too much on our habit of taking the words out of each other’s mouths,” answered Olympia. “What fault do you find with him?”

Spinoza flushed red at having to answer this, partly because he had silently extended similar blame to Olympia, partly because he feared Olympia might misconstrue his words as jealousy. These contradictory thoughts flashed through his mind in a second, and after a short pause Olympia continued :

“Kerkering is thoroughly good-hearted; his loquacity is the national failing of the Hanseatic towns of Germany.”

“Now I see,” replied Spinoza, “that the Jews are not alone in having the fate to be judged in a body by the first and best individual that chance throws in the way. But consider the self-possession and calm judgment of ethical subjects that characterize our friend Oldenburg. Why not take him as a type of the Hanseatic townsmen?”

“You are right,” replied Olympia; “but you make such progress with me that I shall never allow myself to judge in future. I am too easily influenced by surrounding circumstances, and you comprehend the general view so acutely.”

“Do not call it masculine vanity,” responded Spinoza; “but you confirm what I have observed with my sisters and their friends; women seldom seem to feel pleasure in mere rectitude; they do not judge of the deed but the doer, and of him with either partiality or prejudice.”

“Agreed. Well, we are not in the world to philosophize. You agree with me there; you too do not like this jingling prattle, with its cut and dried ready-coined thoughts; if these pennies are always in circulation they become worn out, lose all freshness in the impression, and retain only nominal value. So it is with Kerkering, he is wanting in true inner worth.”

“He has his compensations,” said Spinoza, “he has all the more jingle.”

Olympia seemed to have no inclination to pursue this turn of the conversation, for she continued with her eyes sparkling strangely:

“Our friend Oldenburg always wants me to try my hand at poetry like my namesake Olympia Morata; but I must confess that I pity poets almost as much as I respect them, because they both can and must lay bare their deepest feelings to the eyes



of the whole world. It seems to me that if I were to express to the world my inner life, what constitutes the core of my being, I should no longer be my own; the world would have me, I should remain but a shadow of what I had resigned, and must suddenly vanish away. So I prefer the ancient philosophers' way, who never made their own minds the subject of discussion; they had an esoteric doctrine expressed only in symbols, never in words."

"With the idea with which you started," said Spinoza, "I am in perfect harmony. If I were a theologian I might make an allegory of it: how the high-priest of the temple of Jerusalem, on peril of his life, entered the Holy of Holies but once a year, declaring the unutterable name of Jehovah therefrom, while all the people without fell on their faces. By a little 'pious fraud' we might easily substitute the idea which you have otherwise expressed; but I am not fond of such interpretations, they are usually self-deception or worse."

"Do not take the thing so barbarously literally; that is a glorious interpretation; but once, when the divine unites itself with the human, the Holy of Holies of the temple of the heart may be opened, and the unutterable incorporate itself in words. Why, it would be a good symbol, too, for many situations in life; in daily intercourse those who are near and dear to each other keep their isolated

niches, which then would open, and would forebode what lies so deep in the heart and cannot be expressed."

"Forebodings, even between the most confidential, are often illusions."

"No, not in this case, indeed not. Ah! it is so heavenly to feel, dispensing with words, yet with undoubting confidence, that the very depths of our souls, which no eye can penetrate, are in friendly communication with another's. What can be better than, in the thousand varying circumstances of life, to look into other eyes and know that there every feeling exists with equal power, and in unchangeable harmony with your own?"

With what deep unutterable yearning Olympia gazed at Spinoza; a rich color flushed her cheeks, her lips trembled with excitement, her whole attitude was one of abandonment.

Spinoza regarded her with unmoved countenance. Could a man of such fine feeling, sensitive to the slightest influences of thought and imagination, could he not see that here was a soul yearning for conscious communion with his? Had he no feeling for her? Or did he by force of will repress an inclination that could only bring trouble to both himself and Olympia?

"The unutterable of which you speak," said Spinoza after a painful pause, "I see more clearly day by day must remain such with our thoughts

of God and nature; we are never more than half understood, or are misunderstood."

Clearly he had comprehended Olympia, and wished to turn her thoughts into another channel.

"I shall not be able to come here to-morrow," continued Spinoza; "my sister is to be married to young Casseres. May she be truly happy! She understands me best; we often converse together half the night through."

This digression had not the desired effect.

"You are more fortunate than I," replied Olympia. "I am so lonely. I never knew my mother. You cannot imagine what it is for a girl never to have known her mother. I have often thought how very different I should have been if I had not grown up among men, and been educated almost entirely by my father. That dreadful war robbed me of my only brother; my cousin Cecilia, who has stayed here during my father's absence, was his betrothed. Ah! you would have been a dear friend to Cornelius, perhaps more so than to me."

"Certainly not that—but it is odd you should both have such heathenish names."

Did Olympia not agree to this, or did she really not hear him? Anyhow she continued in the same tone:

"I have often thought that, if one of us must die, would it not have been better if I had died? Cornelius could have been of use to and enjoyed the world; but I—what should I live for?"

“To feel joy in yourself, to illuminate and charm with your intellect and graceful presence,” answered Spinoza, inwardly blaming himself, thinking he had committed a fault in speaking thus.

“You jest,” Olympia answered bitterly. “Once, I confess, I was vain enough to think so, but I have learned to see that nature should have sent me into the world under another mask, and at another period.”

“Pray, do not belie yourself,” interrupted Spinoza. “I am sure you think better of the world and of yourself. I dare not praise you, you say so often I have no eye for beauty.”

Cecilia entered the room at this point, and relieved them both from a painful conversation. Spinoza soon after took his departure. He went home with a peaceful sense of self-conquest, for he thought that he had suppressed, with masculine power, the first buds of Olympia’s inclination for him. A certain secret triumph he could not repress, that he should without solicitation be beloved by such a woman as Olympia.

Olympia was out of temper the whole evening, and as she lay on her bed she bedewed the pillows with bitter tears.

“Has it gone so far with thee,” she said to herself, “that thou throwest thyself on any one’s neck, and he stands with straightened arms!”

She sighed deeply, and Cecilia often inquired

what was the matter with her; she gave no answer, and pretended to be no longer awake, but in fact could find no rest.

“He is a heartless, selfish man, with a frosty intellect!”

No, she could not say that, she could not think so of him. His youthful modesty, his invincible truthfulness, and above all, the unmistakable signs of good will and love for humanity in his countenance, the tender smile of his loving mouth, and the glowing depths of his dark eyes! No, she could not make him a caricature.

Singing and carolling she arose next morning, and as she stood before the glass her looks said:

“No, it has not come to that yet, and were he a god, and thought himself raised above all human woes, my honor and self-respect require that he should kneel to me; and then, having won him, I will see how to begin.”

With gay self-satisfaction she continued her toilette.

Not with such gayety did Miriam de Spinoza don her wedding garments, for religious custom had here ordained a strange and harsh contrast. Beneath the glistening bridal robes the bride must wear the sheet in which she will one day be laid in the bosom of the earth, her winding-sheet; the lovely ringlets of Miriam from this day forward would be hidden beneath the cap and veil; the long



prayer of the Day of Atonement with its list of sins must be repeated; neither meat nor drink must pass her lips till, beneath the wedding canopy, her bridegroom pass her the love-draught in the wedding-goblet, allowing her to drink thereof, then shattering the glass against the wall.

The family feast—since his banishment among all nations the only one of joy remaining to the Jew—aroused to the full his inwardly fostered yearnings. The agitation which the wedding preliminaries and the wedding itself caused in all hearts was now dissipated in unchecked gayety. The married pair pressed each other's hands and told each other that, in view of the newly consummated union, all so long suppressed would receive new life. Youths and maidens looked glowingly at one another; the one became quieter, the other more openly animated to hide their emotions. A tearful thrill was in every voice of the assembly, and yet it sounded as harmony to each, and as they looked from one to the other each read joy in the other's countenance. At table all rejoiced in the affectionate meeting and suitable union, all expressed their joy, and drank to each other's health, and in this expression of their rejoicing it grew yet greater. All praised the bride and bridegroom, their beauty, their good-heartedness, their future happiness, and found a reflection of all these in themselves.

Baruch, in the midst of this community of feel-



ing and rejoicing, was but the more sad and lonely. Was it because he could not help thinking of Olympia that he felt a stranger, or because he was so far removed from the present company in point of thought?

The meal was over, the cigars puffed cheerily, the company grouped themselves according to their liking, and the hum of voices became still more animated as it was heightened by an occasional laugh.

Baruch remained seated at the table; his face was flushed, for he had imbibed no less than the others of the "sweet fire." He dreamily gazed into the bottom of his glass.

Chisdai, who had come to Miriam's wedding feast to conceal the fact of his former wooing, approached Baruch with Ephraim Cardoso. "Wine that rejoices the heart of man" (Ps. civ. 15) he recited, waving his glass with jovial emphasis.

"That is probably the reason why the Talmudists wished men to have no vivifying wine," replied Baruch, "but weakened it by the admixture of water." Baruch addressed the words to his glass, but Chisdai must have overheard them.

"Yes," said Ephraim, as he drank to Baruch, "our forefathers knew how to live. Does not the Talmud say, 'The Spirit of God only rests on man in gladsomeness'? I was once by when the late Professor Barläus said to Rabbi Manasseh Ben Is-

rael, 'Only the Greeks, not even the Romans, understood how really to enjoy life; the Jews were always too much engrossed in fathoming what God was, what he was like, and how he should be served. That they had been fairly successful in, but meanwhile all enjoyment of earthly life had gone to the ground.' He should come here now and see whether we cannot be jovial good fellows in the fear of God."

"Well met, Ephraim," said Baruch, and drank to him kindly.

"And even if what Christ said was true," said Chisdai, as he struck the table, "we could give up all pleasures, ay, even life itself, for the truth that we alone possess, the revelation of the real nature of God. We alone are free from error and deception."

"Ho, ho!" laughed Baruch, "you take too much in your mouth. Do you not know that in the tractate Sabbath" (and he added, according to custom of the Scribes, page 32) "it tells of the Talmudist Rabbi Samuel, who would never go over a bridge unless accompanied by some one of another faith, because Satan could not prevail against two religions?"

Chisdai stroked his young beard and inquired:

"You are now studying the Greeks and Romans; tell me, do you not find all, and much more than all, in Judaism that the learning of other nations can show?"

“Look at the thing aright,” answered Baruch; “there is as much and as little of mere truth in the Bible as in other books. Look at it impartially and not with Jewish prejudice. Is not the human soul sometimes spoken of as contained in blood, sometimes in breath? Ay, and moreover, is God an immaterial being in all passages of the Bible? I know the Bible is said to tell people the literal truth; but consider: God is represented as filling space, for he appears on Mount Sinai in clouds and fire; in the vision of Moses his foot was of white sapphire. And that is the highest ideal of God! There are sublime and pure ideas of God to be found in the Bible; but how he is in and about things, how he creates and maintains, that seems to me to be taken for granted, never proved. And even that on which we lay most stress—the conception of him as the one only Godhead—is not sufficing, and can only be used figuratively, because we cannot form any idea of or expression for the omnipresence of God.”

Chisdai clenched his fists under the table. “And the prophets,” he asked, “have they all known nothing aright?”

“The prophets,” answered Spinoza, “were great and upright men, endowed with a spirit that strove to comprehend the infinite whole; men to whose hearts not only the fate of Israel but that of the whole world lay near. As Isaiah says (xvi. 9),

‘Therefore I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer,’ but beyond that they were men as we are, ay, in many things more ignorant than we are, for in many cases they did not know the first principles of the laws of nature. If the Spirit of God spoke directly by them how could they remain ignorant of such simple things?’

He spoke yet further on these subjects, and in the details he adduced he became yet sharper and more decided. Chisdai remained quiet and cold, but ground his teeth. When he had heard enough he went away with Ephraim without saying a word.

Spinoza remained at the table alone; he would not rise; all seemed so uncongenial and repulsive to him. He had just drunk off a glass of wine to distract his thoughts when his sister Miriam approached him.

“What have you done?” she said. “That spiteful Chisdai is breathing fire and fury against you. I was standing by Chaje in the kitchen, and reminding her how she once dreamed of my wedding, when I heard Chisdai cry, ‘Cursed be the air breathed by this shameless one! You have heard, Ephraim, how Baruch has slandered God and the prophets. Oh, that no hand will stretch from heaven to tear his lying tongue from his jaws! But I will not lay my head down to rest until he is swept from the earth.’ Ephraim tried to pacify him. ‘It is well you were by,’ continued Chisdai.

‘One witness is not evidence; you must go with me before the Sanhedrim; we will accuse him; he must be laid under the great ban; I will yet set my foot on his neck.’ Ephraim said he would not witness against you—he had heard nothing. ‘So you will not!’ cried Chisdai, and seized him by the arm; ‘then you must swear you heard nothing, and if you do you may go to the devil with him.’ I heard it all, for they did not notice me. But, dear brother, you bring the most fearful misfortunes on us. I would rather die now, on my wedding day, than live through this.”

Spinoza pacified his sister, but he could not pacify himself.

“How great you thought yourself yesterday,” he said to himself, “when you told Olympia that our conceptions of highest things should remain unexpressed in the soul. Now you have proved yourself.” The whole day he remained sunk in grief.

Chisdai’s efforts had not the wished-for result. Every one had regard for Benjamin Spinoza and his influential connections; and there were only words not deeds adduced against Baruch. Chisdai was obliged to defer his undertaking to a more favorable opportunity; he could easily wait that length of time, for soon after Miriam’s wedding Baruch’s father again lay dangerously ill. No one would inform the sick man of the rumor that attached to his son.





## CHAPTER XVI.

### PANTHEISM.

OLYMPIA from day to day revealed the wealth of her intellectual and spiritual life more freely to Spinoza, and he felt himself most agreeably excited by the vivacity and elasticity of her mental powers. She had not only that rare quality in a woman—the desire for unvarnished truth in the correction of her modes of thought, but that of accepting unreservedly and freely these demands against herself. She had, moreover, a sort of hospitable motherliness which took charge with friendly alacrity of all that was brought to her, even of what she did not know what to do with. Thus it happened that she perpetually attracted fresh offerings, and many things that the bringer had wholly forgotten she brought forward on some later occasion to his astonishment, and occasioned a double feeling of pleasure to the original possessor—pleasure in the unforeseen possession and in its faithful guardian. Thus Spinoza's thoughts easily took reference to Olympia, and he was more communicative to her than to his friends. Was not such devotion love?

Spinoza knew himself to be free from all desire



to possess Olympia; he found so much to blame in her, and can love find anything to blame in the object of its regard? He rightly disapproved, however, of Olympia's referring so often with indestructible naïveté to the wealth and luxury of her earlier experiences; if a new life had begun for her with his appearance, what was this resurrection of the dead for? Ought not the past to disappear without leaving a trace behind in view of present happiness? Olympia, strange to say, thought to strengthen her partially weakened natural power by her traditional power, but Spinoza's disapproval thereof ought to have served as a proof that he was not perfectly free from the desire for possession, since he certainly desired monopoly of rule. One day Spinoza and Oldenburg were with Olympia.

“Heaven is not favorable to us to-day,” said Oldenburg, “for it makes such a tearful face at us that we must renounce all idea of spending a pleasant day at your hospitable Buiten (country house).”

“Heaven, that is a fine invention!” retorted Olympia jestingly; “that weather prophet (pointing to a barometer) is the thing now. Heaven can no longer do as it likes, Torricelli has shown himself its master. Is it not perfect despair to think that we have now neither Heaven nor Hell? Copernicus and Galileo, more fortunate than the Titans, have

stormed Heaven. The stars nearest to us are dark bodies like the earth, and the earth far off is as bright as the twinkling stars; our star-decked carpet is gone; where now can we place the throne of God? Hell, too, we have no more. There, we used to think, below, far below, roasted and stewed the godless, till Columbus steered ever westward, and now we know that people live there too just as we live. What shall we do now with our pious and godless ones?"

"Jufrow Olympia," answered Spinoza, "did you not perfectly agree with me last Friday when I explained to you that the external appearances of things had justly fallen away that men might hold fast to the ideal of them? Every elevation of mind by which a man rises above his personal harmony and chimes in with the universal harmony—the existence of God you may call it, if you are so fond of the term—is, to my ideas, Heaven and its felicity; that state of forcible separation from self, no hold in self, and no external support in opposition to the laws of natural destiny, shaken by the slightest impulse, without consciousness of unity with the whole—can there be a more frightful hell?"

"Granted," replied Olympia, "but I prefer my earlier ideas."

"That I believe," said Oldenburg; "but you cannot throw such metaphysical ideas at any

one's head; that is not friend Spinoza's fault, however."

Oldenburg had not intended his words to contain any double meaning, but they gave that impression. Olympia blushed, and a pause ensued; but, though embarrassed, she quickly tried to resume the thread of their discussion.

"You can hardly believe," she began, "how inexpressibly miserable I was, when, as a child of ten years old—you must not find out how long ago that is—I realized that there was no sky, and that the earth turned round in infinite space. It seemed as if I held my life in my hand, and might at any moment let it fall. My father soon set me at rest as to the movement of the earth, but I cannot endure the loss of the heavens yet. It was so beautiful when it was a firm canopy, and now the blue dome is nothing but refraction, the blue of the heavens nothing but the blue of the distant mountains, produced by light on one side, and dark bodies in the background on the other. Oh, our beautiful blue heavens!"

Spinoza thought of his grief at the death of his Uncle Immanuel; it was singularly fascinating to feel that Olympia had gone through the same struggle as himself. Oldenburg took it upon him to answer.

"I condole sincerely with you," he said, "to be robbed of the delicious hope of one day hearing

your silvery voice resound in the chorus of the angels, and with wings on your back, glistening with rainbow tints, sing Hallelujah and Hosanna all day long for entertainment."

"The ambassadors of Heaven do not use such stale compliments as the envoys of the Hanse towns," replied Olympia hastily, and, turning to Spinoza, continued: "Listen, I can give you an example from very near what a good refuge the old Heaven is. My cousin Cecilia, who has stayed very long at mass to-day, was the betrothed of my brother Cornelius; now he is dead she is pleased to see her charms fade, for her daily prayer is that God may be pleased soon to take her to her bridegroom in Heaven. On his birthday she writes to him regularly, and describes her life of the past year, rejoicing that another year of their long probation has gone before their eternal union. It is often quite weird to me to be with her. I feel as if I had a sleep-walker with me who, by some unexpected cry, might be startled from her safe elevation."

Cecilia entered dressed in the deep mourning which she had never laid aside since the death of her lover; from the customary black veil, which covered her from head to foot, looked forth a pale, refined face on which pain and sorrow were at home; the weary eyelids drooped over the blue eyes, whose fire was extinguished. The painful

shock which pervades a company when any one enters who has just been spoken of was deepened now by the singular apparition of Cecilia; with a rose-garland in her hand and that pious endurance in her countenance she looked like some beatified penitent. Olympia was secretly annoyed that she had—for which the two friends had already blamed her in their own minds—so publicly revealed the secrets of a broken heart. No one could find a word with which to resume the conversation; even Oldenburg, the sworn foe of all melancholy, could not suppress a shudder when he looked at Cecilia. She, too, felt that she had caused embarrassment, and soon excused herself on the pretext of having forgotten a visit.

“I often envy Cecilia the peacefulness of her faith,” said Olympia.

“You can acquire it yourself,” replied Spinoza.

“No, I cannot,” replied Olympia hastily. “I once complained of my unhappiness to my uncle Boniface, who was priest of St. John’s here. He advised me to read the Bible; I did, but it was of no use. He told me perpetually to read it with a believing mind, but that is what I was seeking in it; if I had it already I should not want the Bible. It seems so hard and difficult often, when I think that I cannot understand the reason and object of the world.”

“I think Descartes could help you over your doubts.”



“Oldenburg, you are a zealous missionary for your philosophical warrior,” said Spinoza. “Do you think Jufrow Olympia would agree with the view that soul and body are each self-existent beings, who would not follow each other if the miraculous intervention of God did not connect them, and constrain them to mutual obedience?”

“That would be a pair in harness such as Frau Gertrui Ufmsand calls unwilling matrimony. I hate that like death.”

“Tell me plainly, do you find the doctrine of Descartes so thoroughly unsatisfactory?” inquired Oldenburg.

“It is not my business to discover the faults of others.”

“Then tell us simply your own solution of the eternal problem.”

“That is not so easy to do; rules concerning external facts are much more easily defined than concerning processes of thought.”

“I have noticed,” said Oldenburg, “instead of Descartes’ *cogito ergo sum* you put *sum cogitans*. To think and to be are inclusive, not exclusive. In that case thunder and lightning are one, even though two different minds first perceive them one after another.”

Spinoza nodded smilingly, and after considerable opposition he explained: “The connection into which Descartes has brought his two substances by



means of a third is only apparent. Two perfectly independent and unconnected substances cannot be co-existent, for where the one ceases the other begins; they exist in proportion, in the exact proportion to their limitation and negation of each other, each one thus neutralizing the absolute independence of the other. Nor can two equally perfect wholes co-exist together, for either they are totally or partially dissimilar, so that neither is perfect, because each one lacks certain perfections of the other, or they are totally similar, in which case they are identical. So that these two substances are not held together by a third, but are merely different appearances of one thing; and we can only think of one thing as perfect and independent of all others, and that is God. Spirit and matter, thought and space, are but different manifestations of one and the same being."

"Is there then a God?" asked Olympia.

"God alone is; the idea of God as necessarily includes the idea of existence as the idea of a triangle includes the idea that the three angles are equal to two right angles."

"Can we have as clear an idea of God as of a triangle?"

"If you ask, Can we have as clear an idea of God as of a triangle? I answer, 'Yes.' If you ask, Can we have as plain an image of him as of a triangle? I answer, 'No.' For we cannot represent God to

ourselves in an image; we can only recognize him in thought. He is the infinitude of all qualities thought of as a unit; but we recognize him only in single manifestations, which we trace back to him as the centre; but we cannot comprehend this centre as such, nor make any exhaustive representation of it. The words *one* and *only one*, with which we could designate God as the only self-existent substance, are always founded on human conceptions. God is an incommensurable quantity, which can have no reference to any other, because nothing beyond it exists. *One* and *only one*, though taken in their exclusive sense, still presuppose a reference to some other."

"Does God then stand in no relation of comparison with nature and history?"

"Nothing exists that is not of him and from him; all that occurs he does; all that is he is; it is only a change of form; the eternal, the infinite is ever the same."

"Oh, that is glorious!" cried Olympia; "the pure childlike joy of nature, with its hidden, smiling deities, such as the ancients had, is here so beautifully combined with the awe-inspired reverence that Jews and Christians observe in the contemplation of nature. God lives in us, ourselves; from the crimson lips of the rose, from the modest eyes of the violet, in the melting notes of the nightingale, the same spirit speaks that lives in me; they know,

and see, and hear me as I see them; we are one. Yea, I think even the inanimate objects have what we call individual life or soul, and cannot understand. Any unskilful lout can blow a flute, but, as we express it, the tones are no longer pure and true; and though we notice no difference in the material, its Psyche is injured. Only a skilful master can again draw out its rightful tones with careful handling; and again we notice no alteration in the material parts. Ay, and the soul of man can just the same be put out of tune, and how it rejoices when the right tone is again elicited."

It was difficult after this digression, which had a certain relative aim, to return to the original common train of thought. Oldenburg wished to hold fast to his more than ordinarily communicative friend, and, in his peculiar manner, he tried first to secure his ally, and enable him to proceed at the same pace. So he turned to Olympia and said:

"Women do not like demonstrations that are not pictorial, in which they are often like children. If philosophy, however, is to be compared to any art it should not be to music, but to the plastic art. Yes, you may smile. Ideas are cold and colorless as marble. The images of the chisel, like abstract thoughts, are not mere portraits of this or that particular figure. They rise the higher the more they become typical. There the beauty of humanity,

here true humanity. The philosopher is a sculptor, however paradoxical it may sound."

Olympia, too, was ready to fall in with his humor, but she turned, not to Oldenburg, but to Spinoza, and said:

"Many ways lead to Rome, also to the Rome of free thought. Each one works out the given material, according to his custom and requirements. I will prove to you that I understand you. When you say we have as clear an idea, but not as clear an image of God as of a triangle, I translate it to myself thus: there are no pure notes; each tone comprises several different ones as it is struck, swells, and dies away. We cannot perceive the pure note, it is too fine for us. Even so we can, in the thought of God, form only an ideal, not an image."

Spinoza said at last, smiling:

"I would only explain still further, that though we feel ourselves one with the infinite, the degrees of consciousness of the innate divine power are yet infinitely different. Above all we must lay aside that pride of humanity that regards everything around it as mere means, and itself alone as the end and aim; that values everything only in its relation to itself—the supposed turning-point. Everything in the world consists of means and end combined."

"I follow the banner of my generalissimo," inter-

rupted Oldenburg, "and ask, Is it not merely a refined materialism to which you return?"

"Were it rational, it would be justifiable, but I come to quite another result. The only and exclusively enduring substance, which to me remains the only conceivable one, is not the rough clod which cannot in any case be got rid of. I do not materialize spirit, I spiritualize matter."

"How do you explain with this eternally identical substance the origin of the world?"

"The idea of cause and effect is innate in us, and recognized by external evidence. If you follow up the train of effects and causes you must at last come to a first cause; this first cannot be the result of any other; it contains the reason of its existence in itself; it is cause and effect in its original un-createdness; is God in his revelation as world. The origin of the world is the origin of God himself; the one is not imaginable without the other. The world is the only external manifestation of the existing God. If God has the power in himself to create the world he must create it, for in him dwells no power that does not immediately proceed to its exercise; a latent, useless power would be imperfection which we could not ascribe to God as the ideal of all perfection. It can neither be a casual nor an arbitrary external, nor a similar internal motive which sets this power in motion; not external, for God, as the epitome of all per-



fection, must be absolutely independent, and cannot be subject to any external influence; it cannot be internal either, as a mere exertion of arbitrary will, for if God could will this, or will the other, he might also will something imperfect, in opposition to his nature; he can only will the perfect, and his will is deed, so all in him is inevitable necessity. God has the world in him, and is in it; God and the world are alike eternal. Truly those who have thought of God as something above the world, floating in empty space (which does not exist), to them God was before the world; he created it out of nothing, and still hovers over it in Heaven. But long ago men were aware that from nothing something cannot come, and so must have recourse to strange theories of emanation. So the world remains ever something that God has cut loose from himself, which he watches over and with which he interferes from time to time; so that, according to their theory of things, the miracles are acts by which God disturbs the once firmly settled order of nature, his own revelation. But miracles were done only as long as men believed in them; in our time there are no more. Are we therefore forsaken of God? In any case, if this were the true view, but it is not, for God is not the external cause, but the internal innate cause of the world's existence, in him all is an act of free necessity, everything—”

“Look! look! there is a white raven!” cried



Olympia, rushing to the window, and Oldenburg stood up to see what she meant by the ill-timed jest; Spinoza only sat still and smiled quietly; but Olympia could hardly contain herself for laughing.

“You a statesman!” cried Spinoza, “and not see that I was guilty of a *mésalliance* between royal families of ideas! But sit down again, and I will avenge you on the jester. I purposely chose the expression. Tell me what is the meaning of necessity?”

“I was confirmed long ago, and need not be catechised so strictly; yet—necessity is anything that must be.”

“Only half expressed; all that without innate opposition to its own nature cannot otherwise than be, that is necessity. That no slumbering power can be imagined in God I have already proved to you; and all that he does, and is, he is and does from innate necessity, but freely; for to be free is to be moved to act of himself, and from no outward or neighboring cause. God, therefore, outside whom nothing is, and who continually wills of himself, acts continually in perfect freedom; ay, even men then are not free (as is usually believed) when they act in contradiction to the laws of their nature; for there it is always an external impulse they obey, not their own nature; they are only truly free when they act in accordance with the necessities, or, if

you prefer it, the laws, of their nature, for then it is only themselves whom they obey."

"Still another question occurs to me," interrupted Olympia. "God, who has his laws or his necessities in himself, is in all his acts free; but men, who have received the cause and laws of their actions from God, act according to the universal will, and yet are not free?"

"The individual inclination is as different from the universal will as Peter and Paul are from mankind; they exist and act for themselves in individual freedom, though they fall collectively under the idea and laws of humanity, of which they cannot pretend to be perfect representatives. Whoever has advanced so far that his individual inclinations are in immediate accord with the universal laws of reason, so that he destines himself for what God or nature has destined him, he lives in God, and is a partaker in the highest felicity, but only a partaker. In the individual the community cannot be included; it is as impossible as the squaring of the circle."

"But in that way," objected Oldenburg, "if everything happened inside the limits and according to the laws of the universal or divine will, the evil would be as much of necessity as the good, and he who does evil is not accountable for it. All therefore must be blessed. And the Scriptures lie

that say, God punishes the wicked. Evil is thus a necessity, and why did God create it?"

"When it is called so in the Scriptures, it is because they are not written to teach men philosophy, but only obedience and righteous living, and therefore accommodate themselves to ordinary ways of expression. God, however, did create what we in our ordinary conceptions call imperfections, because he had the material to create everything with one word, from the highest to the lowest degrees of perfection; or, to speak more exactly, because the laws of his nature are so comprehensive that they are sufficient for the creation of all that can only be grasped by an infinite intelligence. Men can be excused their deeds, and though losing in happiness on that account, they may be chastened with much trouble and sorrow. I answer with Paul," continued Spinoza in a stern voice, 'They act according to their nature like serpents, and like serpents must therefore be destroyed.' He who becomes mad through a dog's bite, is he not excused? And yet men do right to burn him. He who cannot restrain his inclinations, or control himself by regard for the law, is to be excused on account of his weakness; but yet he will never rejoice in peace of mind, the knowledge and love of God, which is the only true good; it is a matter of necessity that he goes to ruin."

“You speak of the love of God,” said Oldenburg, “of that which we have for him, and of that which he bestows upon us. If, as you say, God does everything of necessity, he does nothing for love, and because he must do everything, if he would not resign his own existence, he cannot demand our love, and we could not offer it to him.”

“That is a fine objection!” replied Spinoza. “Must love be something in opposition to nature, or arbitrary, to be accepted as such, or to earn a return of love? Was it not love that your father bestowed upon you? And did you love him less, because he must love you according to his innate nature? What is commonly called the miracle of love arises from that innate, and therefore free, determination by that highest necessity which is placed in our nature; and that is true love, with the indelible stamp of divinity. Each outward act, each labor, each work of art is the freer and more perfect the less arbitrary will has to do with it, the more thorough the innate law has become and lets it appear to be a free product of nature. The self-knowledge of what each one will, or ought to do, that is salvation; therefore love of God is the highest salvation, or, as I might call it, the highest felicity.”

Olympia followed the two friends but unwillingly and with difficulty into the icy region of metaphysical contemplation, where no flowers bloomed,

and no birds sang, and all below was enveloped in the mists of the universal. She admired and revered Spinoza's intellectual power that could bear her up there, and give her a glimpse of the infinite, but it was strange to her to be here above the clouds, the way to her organ, her well-ordered books and gay canary birds lay so far away; so she greeted these words of Spinoza's as a message from her happy, familiar home life. She was no longer afraid of this heaven-storming hero-mind, for he who could speak such words as these, he must know how to love. Her cheeks glowed, her sparkling eyes gazed absently into space, her whole soul was deeply moved. The two friends did not notice it, for they were discussing the unbroken and insoluble connection of the universe. At last Spinoza looked at Olympia, and she at him; their eyes met.

"Where were you then?" asked Spinoza with tender reproach.

"Oh, everywhere!" answered Olympia as if just awakened.

"But not with us," said Spinoza. He little knew how these words wounded Olympia.

"There I have another plain proof," triumphed Oldenburg, "that body and soul are two perfectly distinct and independent things. Your soul floated far away in far distant realms, and wholly forgot that you were simply here with us."



“If you turn all the events of the moment so quickly to your own interest, I congratulate the inhabitants of the good town of Bremen on their envoy.”

“Never mind,” said Spinoza; “he only wants to revenge himself for the white crow; he is not in earnest.”

“At least I am in earnest in thinking that such examples taken from surrounding circumstances are the best warnings against vague speculations.”

“So-called practical proofs easily take a somewhat angry or fanatical tone,” answered Spinoza, laughing. “I only said spirit and body were inseparable and dependent on each other in so far that they can only be viewed as different manifestations of one and the same being; the spirit cannot be confined by the body nor the body by the spirit. Still no one has discovered what the body is capable of without the spirit, or by what means the spirit sets the body in motion. Indeed there is a considerable class of ideas to which we know indubitably certain qualities of body are needful. Speech and silence even, which we regard as prerogatives of the mind, and from which man deduces his absolute pre-eminence, prove nothing, for in sleep and delirium men speak without any voluntary effort, yet through the mind. Free thought, reaching far beyond our mere bodily sphere, always



finds room without the intervention of any independent separation from the body.”

“As for me I will not attempt to oppose your theory,” said Oldenburg; “this co-ordinance, and so to say co-divinity of mind and body, agrees with a favorite idea of my own. I always disliked to hear the phrase, ‘fleshly desires war against the spiritual.’ This helotry of our body with the godly suppression of the devil-nature of our physical selves, must if consistent, as with the Hindoos, not only excuse suicide, but even represent it as the highest moral duty.”

“Paradox, rank paradox!” said Spinoza. “A suicide under any circumstances is guilty of spiritual cowardice, for he lets himself be completely overcome by external things that happen to be in opposition to his nature. From the lowest stage to the higher of the natural order it is the fundamental duty of every component part to fulfil its destiny, and this in a reasonable manner; that is, as our veritable constitution, shown by nature, would do by *Virtue*. This is no egotistical principle, for this self-preservation is impossible without the corresponding preservation of others. What corresponds externally with our nature and this effort of self-preservation is good, so much the more what lies in our nature itself is good; naturally we must herewith keep firmly before our eyes that only the true knowledge of God and our own nature is the

essential good, and that we must direct the aim of our lives to this. Good and evil, viewed on their own merits, are not positive qualities (which is also, to a certain extent, the watchword of your General); they are only differing forms of thought or conception which arise because we compare things to one another. Your favorite occupation, for example, Jufrow Olympia, music, is good to the melancholy, bad to the sad, and to the deaf is neither good nor bad." Olympia would have objected, but Spinoza continued with animation:

"We would have it for the ideal of mankind that we should consider the expression *Good* as answering to all of which we certainly know that it is approximate to the original model of human nature, and *Evil*, of which we certainly know that it is in opposition to it. No man, thief, murderer or debauchee, no man desires evil for evil's sake; but, in the moment in which he commits the crime, it seems good to him for his self-preservation, for the increase and improvement of his own well-being, and is only erroneous in this, that in following his passions he becomes unfaithful to the laws of his nature. The freeman, that is one who, coming straight from the hands of God or nature, knows naught of the ideas of good or evil, acts in every circumstance according to the immediate impulse of the laws of his nature; then, when the dissension between his wishes and requirements, and the com-

mands of his nature first enters, and when he wishes to avoid this by the intervention of others, the knowledge of good and evil, and evil itself, enters. The dissension occurs because he wishes to control himself by another and an external means, and no longer acts in free accord with his internal laws; the discord lies in the fact that, for the fulfilment of his natural laws he requires an agreement with outward circumstances. The free, independent human being, such as the earliest one, knows no difference of good and evil; he acts ever in accordance with internal harmony and freedom. With society entered dissension, sin and history. It must ever remain our highest object again to incorporate this freedom and independence, without disturbing the existing constitution of society. On the contrary, not in solitude, but in communities, where we live in mutual conformity, we are free. We must mentally return to that standpoint of innate freedom where it was given us to know and follow of necessity the laws of God, that is, of our nature. Such was the pure object of Jesus Christ, to lead mankind back to the original freedom of their laws, in natural harmony with them. Therefore was he come, according to his own words, not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it."

Spinoza had carefully avoided all details that could give occasion for a digression; but Olympia,

who had again obliged herself to follow the discussion, now asked:

“Can we not demand from your ideas that they should heal the ills of the world, and make the sick and sorrowful whole and joyful!”

“I do not understand what you mean.”

“I ask how, in your view of the creation, do you explain physical ill? That is, something actual? You have told us of the merry glass-polisher, Peter Blyning. How was the good man in fault that he should be doomed to shuffle along club-footed?”

“You confuse your questions so one with another that I must take the liberty of separating them. What consolation has the usual view of things for Peter Blyning? such as, ‘Whom God loveth he chasteneth,’ or ‘We are here but candidates for a higher career.’ The question still remains, Why should his candidature be made so difficult? Above, all will be set right for him, they say; but if he is to have two feet up there, he has not them here, and has much pain for want of them. The easiest way of shuffling off this question is to say, ‘The ways of God are unfathomable;’ that is, in other words, to let the question remain a question. But the solution of this problem lies in quite another direction. All ideas of perfection and imperfection, beauty and ugliness, like the final causes which we ascribe to nature, are not necessarily appropriate,

but merely ascribed to her by us, for we give things relations which they do not possess. All these ideas merely arise because we compare things of similar form and species, and then discover faults and failings where none such exist. Everything is perfect, for each thing must be compared with itself alone. Error and confusion always arise because we prefer to measure things by ideals, that is, with universal ideas which we have acquired or imagined. The ideal or pure idea of any given thing should only be derived from itself, from its own nature and attributes. Then the complaint ceases, that the world does not realize our expectations. Each force exists and appears according to its own laws, not according to an ideal. What does not follow inevitably from the necessary working of the natural cause is no part of the nature of a thing, and all that necessarily follows from the nature of the effecting cause must of necessity be. Beyond this we cannot and must not demand anything; there is no rule and no obligation beyond, and we can apply no higher measure. Peter Blyning is, when viewed on his own merits, as perfect as the most perfect Adonis. He can no more desire other feet than he can demand wings, for the fundamental cause of his being merely suffices for this form, and for no other. Do you think it an imperfection that an ox is an ox and not an eagle? To every stage of human existence it is permitted



to feel and to find agreement with self and with the universe, and to be raised to, and sustained in, serenity by it. Our consciousness of harmony or discord with our assigned nature; the belief that this consciousness is given us, which man as a mere instinct calls conscience—”

“Conscience is a stocking that fits any foot. The savage strikes his father dead when he is old and infirm, and thinks it his conscientious duty; the Jew’s conscience reproaches him when he eats the flesh of swine, and the Catholic beats his breast when he has neglected mass.”

So spoke old Van den Ende, who then suddenly entered. Spinoza quietly replied that no man could reason away conscience. That pure conscience which merely exists in the feelings, and which men have dressed in all manner of external shapes, must often be liable to deception; but that inner voice which enters our consciousness, which tells us so plainly when we have acted in opposition to the laws of our nature and the universal order, is as undeniable and reliable as our knowledge of our own existence.”

“Yes, my dear father,” said Olympia; “I shall always be grateful to Herr von Spinoza for the many great ideas which he has imparted to us.”

She then explained to her father the leading ideas of what had just been said. Spinoza had now and then to add something, but on the whole he saw



with inexpressible pleasure how completely Olympia had entered into the grounds of his views. This pleasure did not long remain undisturbed, for the laughter of old Van den Ende annoyed him extremely.

“Do you remember the saintly Christopher in the asylum at Milan, of whom I told you?” he said. “He would suit you very well; he, too, was of a piece with God. Ha, ha, ha! There is yet something excellent left to laugh at.”

Spinoza’s whole soul rose against these words. Mockery is the deadliest poison to kill the seed of life in a growing character or a growing idea. Our philosopher, however, was sufficiently strong already to blunt and turn off with little trouble all the pointed arrows that Van den Ende discharged at his speculations. Spinoza felt strangely touched when Olympia said to him at parting :

“I am now quite grateful to the rain for having confined us to four walls. I do not think such connected trains of thought as you have given us could arise, or be expressed, in the freedom of nature; color, sound and fragrance would protest against it, for that we must be alone and at home. The wise Greeks did not attain to it because they lived and taught in the open air. Come to-morrow to our Buiten; Socrates and Plato await you among the green bushes.”

Spinoza had not time to explain what a singular

echo this expression awoke in him, for he recollected that the Rabbis ordain: "When two go together to speak of the Revelation (the Thora), and one says, 'Look how beautiful that field is, how beautiful that tree'—he has committed a deadly sin."

Does the highest thought demand abstraction from the outer world?

The two friends left the house in silence; Cecilia met them just in front of it.

"You too must say, 'He that is able to receive it let him receive it'" (Matt. xix. 12), said Oldenburg; Spinoza pressed his hand and they separated.

After such a discussion he was obliged to go to the synagogue.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### PROSELYTES.

“**D**E LAGCHLUST ” was the inscription over the entrance to the Van den Ende’s country house outside the Utrecht Gate, with its freshly painted doors and window shutters; it was neat and modest, and gave evidence, in the laying out of the garden, the well-covered espaliers, rich flower-beds and shady groves, of the Dutch character, which, failing in the beauties of mountainous country, found means by higher culture to give their plains a quiet beauty of their own.

We meet our familiar companions here in the open air at last, Olympic gods hidden in the bushes, and above them all on a soft green lawn the bust of Democritus attracted all eyes.

To-day the garden and house did not seem to answer to their name. No desire to laugh was apparent. A peculiar feeling of depression seemed to possess them all.

Kerkering and Van den Ende walked away to a distant path in animated conversation; the two friends joined Olympia and Cecilia. Olympia bade Spinoza lay his cares aside; his father’s illness was

certainly not serious. He should give himself up to the serene enjoyment of nature for the present.

"Your King Solomon," she continued, "must have been very fortunate to understand the speech of all birds and beasts; he must have been so much at home with nature."

"Perhaps he was too much at home therein, and that is why he said all is vanity," interposed Oldenburg.

"I do not miss Solomon's skill in my enjoyment of nature," said Spinoza. "Nature would annoy me if she were eternally chattering to me of all her doings, and never left me to myself."

He had no second thought in saying these words, but Oldenburg and Cecilia looked at each other in embarrassment as they listened to them, for Olympia often had somewhat of the lecturing tone common to most teachers, who, from the habit of seeing pupils stand before them in mute attention, carry their explanations and expositions into conversation also.

Olympia, however, had not the faintest idea of such an application of this speech. She applied it rather to their parting words of the previous day.

"I cannot bear to enjoy nature alone," she said. "When I felt myself carried away into other worlds by the enjoyment of pure sight, I involuntarily grasped at my side to press some friendly hand in mute sympathy."

No one answered; each one looked at the ground. Oldenburg had for some time perceived the relations arising between Olympia and Spinoza by their occasional glances and turns of speech. He was diplomatist enough to believe he could employ these intercepted secret messages towards founding a friendly compromise without an open explanation.

“What do you say,” he said, “to Queen Christina of Sweden having presented her crown and sceptre to her cousin, not, as we at first supposed, to garland herself merely with the poet’s laurel, but to deck her brows with the myrtle wreath?”

“What!” exclaimed Olympia; “is Queen Christina going to be married?”

“Commercial advices arrived yesterday from Rome, in which it is decidedly affirmed that the daughter of Gustavus Adolphus will return to the bosom of the one true Church, in order to be able to marry her High-Chamberlain Monaldeschi.”

“Indeed Queen Christina has cast off all earthly considerations freely and unrestrainedly to partake of the blessings of our faith,” said Cecilia in a gentle voice, and no one contradicted her.

“If the daughter of Gustavus Adolphus has done this,” said Olympia after a pause, “that she might belong wholly to the man of her choice, the deed is above all reproach; love is a bond which ought to loosen all earlier ones. How simply and truly it is

expressed in the Bible where it says, 'For her sake leave father and mother.' The question here is only whether the obedience of the so-called weaker sex goes so far as to make the sacrifice hers in this case. Christina of Sweden has certainly done enough by her abdication; is it not rather the man's duty to take this unpleasant step instead of hers? If he would not do it he would be unworthy of, and lost to, her love, and her step would be censurable."

"But if such a step were in opposition to his own convictions?"

Olympia did not answer and looked at the ground.

Spinoza hesitated whether to join in the conversation or not, for he had partly penetrated Oldenburg's intention. As Olympia, however, here looked at him with an entreating and inquiring glance, he replied :

"If Monaldeschi were the cause of her abdication, and knew it, he had taken upon himself responsibilities towards the Queen, and nothing ought longer to prevent him from agreeing to her wishes in everything; but if insuperable objections existed for him, he ought, as a man of honor, to have rejected the connection from the beginning, as one whose obligations he neither could nor would fulfil. I might make a more general application of this event. The reformed ministers of this country



accept the doctrine of Descartes as the best deduction from Calvin's. Queen Christina, the most zealous follower of this philosopher, who taught her himself, can find proofs in it on which to ground her conversion to the Catholic Church."

"The Catholic religion is the mother Church, and it is a natural impulse to return to it."

"Speak out," said Oldenburg to Spinoza. "I see by the corners of your mouth you wish to answer, If the Catholic Church is the mother, the Jewish is the grandmother Church, and could just as well demand that we should don her vestments. But we will take another example. Turenne is so pre-eminently a field marshal by nature, he will only bear the star of his own faith on his breast, standing in the front, and not in the ranks among the members of the Catholic Church like a common soldier. Is he not right to do so?"

Spinoza noticed the digression as Van den Ende, who had come into the circle with Kerkering, interposed:

"Turenne is a soldier, and soldiers, who hourly risk their lives, do not willingly lay aside their familiar armor; they think this or that superstition has made them shot free; but if once peace were made I do not think it would be difficult to make Turenne turn Catholic."

"Were he capable of loving a girl tenderly and ardently," added Kerkering, "he would soon join

the one saving faith of her possession. It would be cowardice then, when the greatest was at stake, not to be able to conquer a prejudice acquired in the nursery. He who truly loves can only believe in his beloved one; her heart is his church, her words his only revelation, she alone is worthy of his reverence, and nothing is above her. That is the true regeneration that we desire in a maiden's love, which makes us inseparably one with her. Who can think then of the limitations which men place around one another?"

His companions stared in astonishment at Kerkering's words; only old Van den Ende nodded approvingly, and Olympia said after an awkward pause:

"While we are talking over principles, a poet's mistress, sick unto death, is perhaps dying for such principles."

"Who is that?" inquired Oldenburg.

"The betrothed of your former friend, the poetess Maria Tesselschade, will hardly greet to-morrow's dawn. Did you know Caspar Barläus, Herr von Spinoza?"

"No, Jufrow Olympia, but my old master, Nigritius, who was once insulted by him, has often abused him to me."

"Seven years since," continued Olympia, "I remember it quite well, it was not long after New Year's Day of 1648, they found him in the well

near the weighing-house quite dead. He had been with his betrothed the evening before. The well was on the way to his own house."

"Had he thrown himself in?"

Olympia nodded assent; she forbore to assent in words.

"He certainly killed himself," Oldenburg remarked; "but it is incomprehensible to me how he could hold fast to Tesselschade for so many long years, and at last, when they were both grown old, take such a desperate step because he could not marry her."

"Why could he not?"

"She was Catholic and he was Protestant; indeed, he had formerly suffered much persecution as a Remonstrant. His whole thoughts were borrowed from the ancient Greek and Roman world, and yet he could not make up his mind for love of Tesselschade to change his form of faith."

"It is ridiculous," added Van den Ende, taking up his daughter's words; "he sang all the stories of the Old and New Testaments, with all the Greek and Roman mythology, and Arcadian pastorals; he could not say a word without parading the whole Olympus; he translated even his own love into the language of Horace."

"It seems to me, dear father," said Olympia, "that Barläus was obliged to translate all his thoughts into Latin in order to understand them

perfectly. Herr von Spinoza, you must read his poems; a soul overflowing with human love is expressed in them. He had a Rubric of his own, *Tessalica*, in which he sang to his mistress as she sat her horse, and as she sang to her harp, to her ruff and her string of pearls; everything of hers inspired him to poetise. In one òde he sang,

Tessela quae cœlo potes deducere lunam,  
Et tetricos cantu demeruisse Deos—\*

Do you understand the pun by which he changed the name Tesselschade into Tessela?"

"No."

"In the second Idyl of Theocritus Tessela is an infallible love-charm, the name was given to the plant from which the philter was prepared, but we do not know the plant itself."

"You will always and forever be my instructress," said Spinoza.

"Will you not, when you have found out how, instruct us in magic?" inquired Kerkering.

"You are already an enchanted prince," replied Olympia. "Herr von Spinoza, do you believe in magic?"

"In yours," he replied hastily. Oldenburg shook his head disapprovingly.

"You have forgotten one main point in the love

\* Tessela, thou canst draw down the moon from Heaven with thy songs, and bind the gods of darkness with gratitude.

story of Barläus," he said. "Do you recollect that, in the epistle dedicatory prefixed to his poems, he maintains that the three *L's* are incompatible with matrimony, *Libri*, *Liberi* and *Libertas*, as they do not co-operate well? Poor fellow, he wrote epithalamiums for all the world, and could not have a wedding of his own."

"He wrote a lovely *Carmen* on the wedding of my Uncle Overbeck, in Hamburg," Kerkering threw in. Oldenburg continued:

"If a truly sublime and thoroughly poetic soul had dwelt in Barläus, and the professor not peeped out from every hole and corner in him, the denied possession of his Tesselschade and his own pure love for her alone might have made him become as a fragrant garden of heavenly poetic bloom. If Dante had embraced his Beatrice, if Laura had cooked bread-soup for Petrarch, never would the one have raised himself to be the Homer of the Christian cosmography by his immortal canzones, and the eternal harmony of Petrarch's sonnets would have been drowned in the cries of fretful children. Poetry is not the vulture of fable that perpetually consumes life; it is the flame from which the phœnix springs rejuvenescent, and with uninjured flight soars heavenward. For individual men, as well as for struggling humanity, the highest possession would be disgust and death, or happy delirium."



"What! can this be Herr Oldenburg?" asked Olympia in astonishment.

"That is a very original idea. Then monks and nuns, in their self-renunciation, are the chosen army of poets."

"You want to put me in the wrong by a clever sophistry," answered Oldenburg, "but I am not so stupid. I only affirm that a man of truly great mind must not cling with his whole vitality to any one arbitrarily idealized person; if he does so he has fallen from God to man, and he dies the death of a man, for he is confined between the hard boards of every-day regrets and necessities. Ay, even could he be free, and find his self-created ideal realized, he would be obliged to fly from it."

"I am also of your opinion," said old Van den Ende; "the gods could not have more effectually punished Pygmalion than when they granted his prayer. Such a marriage must be barren."

"There are no ideals on earth and can be none," said Oldenburg in an animated tone; "foolish is he who seeks such, and still more foolish is he who believes he has found them. They may live in us, and hover above us in glorified memories. How infinitely great is Dante when he sings his pure, refined love!"

"There was a time when you thought otherwise," said Olympia.

"I think so still. I myself have no claim to the



highest crown of humanity; as I am live thousands of the great multitude; I must surrender myself prisoner. But if I see a friend, gifted with an exalted and commanding mind, letting himself be imprisoned within the four walls of commonplace, bowing his great mind to serve a self-created idol, I would spurn him from me; for he thus becomes a traitor to the greatness and majesty of his calling; but if he can keep that ideal, which has never perfectly appeared to his consciousness, pure and high, I esteem him happy."

"A sad martyrdom it is to which you condemn the higher minds," said Olympia.

The shades of night were falling; they separated.

Spinoza accompanied Olympia home. She hung on his arm. He did not know how he had gained courage and good fortune for such close communion. Old Van den Ende took care of Cecilia. Olympia and Spinoza followed in silence. When they came to the roadside house Olympia said:

"Look, there is the well in which the weak, good-natured Barläus drank his death. Would it not have been more reasonable and manly to give up his faith than his life?"

"We have not given ourselves either faith or life," answered Spinoza. "Suicide of either one or the other is cowardly and weak; strength lies in bearing one and the other; deny yourself for them, or learn to free them." Olympia was silent.

“This diplomatic obtrusive mediation enrages me,” she said after a pause, “that Oldenburg thought to effect so artfully to-day. A third, who disturbs a tender relation with a word, originates estrangements and misunderstandings which but for him would never have arisen, or would much sooner have been extinguished.”

“I am glad you think so,” said Spinoza, and bit his lips in violent mental conflict. “Dear Olympia,” he continued, “I have struggled with all my might, but I am not so strong as you think. I fall if you do not grant me your hand, or rather if you do not withdraw it from me. I cannot say the word that my heart would speak to you, but I conjure you, send me from you; never, never must we belong to one another.”

Olympia pressed his arm closer to her, her voice trembled, both hands were clasped.

“What!” she asked. “Why not? Have we nailed Christ to the cross? What does it matter to us what a fanatical crowd did thousands of years ago? Have you risen to such a height of intellect to be frightened by a form to which men have bound themselves? Have you not told me a hundred times you loved and revered the spirit of Christ as that of the Saviour of the world? Would to God our relative positions were reversed! Joyfully would I follow you to the altar. Where love is,

perjury cannot be. Or shall I hasten to the synagogue, and be baptized by the Rabbis?"

"Dear Olympia, if you but knew the force of the pain which now rends my heart you would not speak to me so. It would be perjury, naught else, if I swore to accept knowingly any other faith. Thanks to progressive development I can declare myself free from the form of faith into which I was born, and can build up for myself a view of higher things as nature gives the hand to my powers of mind. I can and will be withheld by no personal consideration from speaking out, and living according to my convictions of faith and opinion; a religious community in which I have been placed by chance of birth cannot hinder me therefrom. But it is otherwise wilfully to enter such. The new community could justly ask me, What draws you to us if it is not Truth? You have no longer a claim to influence in the old, or in the newly accepted sanctuary. I know the sophisms well enough that are suggested to us: you merely follow the form, your intellect is still free. But it is and ever will be perjury, and durst I, a perjurer, ever take the word truth on my lips without blushing? My unhappy countryman Uriel Acosta, of whom I have told you before, thus ended his life by a dreadful suicide, because he had already committed the suicide of his intellect by recantation. He must have ap-

peared to himself despicable, and unworthy of life in face of that truth. Yes and no were worth nothing to him; they had become meaningless." Olympia was silent; she pressed one hand to her eyes, and allowed herself to be blindly led by Spinoza. He continued in an agitated voice:

"I return your question: Have we thus climbed these heights of intelligence to allow ourselves to be conquered by an inclination which must be the source of infinite trouble to us? I fought long, but I must at last speak to you frankly and honorably; from this hour henceforward let us forget and lay aside all that we were to each other and that we wished to be. It is yet time. Separation and a strong will may enable us again to find peace. We have loved, that is enough. Seek with another the happiness I dare not offer, cannot offer."

His tongue refused to go on; he was obliged to stop. Olympia's hand trembled in his.

"I am not ashamed to confess I have thought it over," said she. "You can become a Christian without any denial of your convictions; I have even consulted the passage for you. Do you know that the root of your new views lies in the words of John? 'Hereby we know that we dwell in Him and He in us, because He hath given us of His spirit.' Indeed, without any inconsistency you must be a Christian."

"Why do you not quote the preceding verse,"

answered Spinoza, "which has so close an application to our case? 'If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.' But reflect; if some results of my process of thought agree with the Christian views of the world, must I therefore swear to the Church-creed? Perhaps that would be the result contemplated by Justus Lipsius, who, as you know, wrote a book called *De Constantia* (on constancy), and changed his faith every two years."

"I thought you were more independent, but I see Oldenburg has perverted you too," said Olympia in a cutting tone. "You strive after the glory of Dante, but I am no Beatrice, and will not be. Oh, it is too bad! You will throw yourself into active life; a youthful affection is easily forgotten then. Perhaps you will jest over it, while I—what does it matter if I fade away in grief?"

"Dear Olympia," interposed Spinoza, "your own heart must blame you for such words. Reflect a moment; what could I offer you? Nothing but a poverty-stricken life of self-denial. If I could forswear the faith of my fathers, if I could live wholly for you alone—be wholly yours . . ."

"Schalom Alechem, Rabbi Baruch, you need not be in haste. Maariph\* is ended," a harsh voice interrupted their conversation. Spinoza turned

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\* Evening prayer in the synagogue.

round; it was Chisdai, who, without awaiting a response, went on shaking his head.

“Did that man hear what I said?” asked Spinoza.

“I think not,” answered Olympia; “but it is horrible that such Medusa faces can speak familiarly to you. That decides it; a higher duty has its claims. I will not desert you. I hate renunciation; it is nothing but hypocritical cowardice; it would be unworthy of yourself and of me.”

They had arrived at the Van den Ende’s house. Spinoza would have taken his leave.

“You must come in with us,” said Olympia. “You can hardly imagine how dreary it seems to me when I have gone through great agitation of mind out of doors to go in alone where the familiar walls seem altered and strange. Everything is a burden to me. I think I shall die of restlessness and inexpressible longing. Generally I then play the organ until I find rest in perfect stupefaction. Come in with me, I entreat you.’



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### KISSING AND DYING.

CECILIA was praying in the next room before her crucifix. Spinoza sat silently near Olympia; her hand rested close to his, but he did not attempt to clasp it. Dreamily and reflectively the two lovers looked long at each other in silence.

“When I am so exalted to the very highest point of rapturous spiritual enjoyment,” said Olympia, “I feel nothing but longing for death. Now, borne so far above all small annoyances, now I would that I might die. So near and akin to the Highest, I should be absorbed into his being.”

“Formerly, when I was still capable of such religious raptures, I was often possessed by such a desire for death,” replied Spinoza. “We might, perhaps, find the explanation of this sensation in the Talmudist legend that Moses died of a kiss, in that God the Lord recalled his soul to himself in a kiss.”

Olympia was taken by surprise at this strange turn. Was this mind always absorbed in its investigations, or did he wish by such parables to veil the ardent wish of his heart, and yet to explain it? Formerly their exchange of thoughts had been easy;

now they sat mutely together and did not know what to say to one another. At Spinoza's desire Olympia sang the ballad he had surprised her while singing the first time he saw her. She sang the refrain

"You are my own true wife,  
No other shall be my own for life"

with such melting tenderness, and drew out the notes of the organ by which she accompanied herself into such long-drawn sighs that Spinoza painfully missed the repose which the song had once given to his agitated heart. It was with difficulty that he refrained from clasping her to him and sealing the melodious spring of song with a kiss. He could trust himself no longer, so he took his hat and went away. Olympia took the lamp and lighted him down the steps, but without a word. Below Spinoza held out his hand; she laid her curly head on his breast; he embraced her; her heart beat violently under his hand.

"Dear Olympia," he said, "I conjure you by all that is holy, love me not; I am not worthy of it."

"I must love you," she said. "Command my heart to cease beating. I cannot leave you!" Her voice trembled; he pressed her closer to his breast, and held her fast with an ardent kiss. He then tore himself from her embrace and rushed out. Olympia sprang warbling up the steps and cried in

a sprightly voice, "Good night, Herr von Spinoza!"

He stood before the house; the door shut behind him. With heavy sighs passed care-laden married couples who endeavored to enjoy the holiday evening in the fresh air; lovers passed with quicker steps and livelier conversation; sailors sauntered on and merrily sang and chorused the old Dutch ballad:

- "To eastern lands will I journey,  
There dwells my sweetest love;  
Over hill, and over valley,  
Far over the moorland,  
There dwells my sweetest love.
- "The sun from sight has sunk under;  
The stars now blink out so clear;  
I know that I with my loved one,  
Far over the moorland,  
Was in that orchard so near.
- "The garden door is fastened,  
And no one can come in,  
But the nightingales only,  
Far over the moorland,  
Who fly from far to come in.
- "We must the nightingales fasten  
Their heads to their feet close to,  
That they may tell naught to others,  
Far over the moorland,  
Of what two sweet lovers there do.

“And though you had thus bound me,  
My heart is not the less sound;  
So thus I can yet prattle,  
Far over the moorland,  
Of two sweetest lovers’ death-wound.”

It was a varied throng. Spinoza hardly noticed it. “Women’s ways are indeed unfathomable!” he said to himself. “Did she not feel the infinite depth of that moment? Or did she act with such apparent indifference to all that had passed to hide it quickly from Cecilia? But how could she possibly do it?”

He could not go home in such agitation of mind; he crossed the street, and sat down on the steps of the chapel of St. Olave’s. He looked across at Olympia’s lighted windows, and often saw her shadow pass backwards and forwards until the light was extinguished. He was almost ashamed of himself, gazing at the windows of his beloved like a sentimental knight, and laughed internally as Tessala occurred to him.

“I cannot leave you, say you. I will not, I dare not leave you, I tell you; have I not pressed your coy, pure lips to mine? You are mine, mine forever. Was not my mother a Moslem, and changed to our faith? Should I have remained a Moslem if by chance I had been born such? But thy father and mother loved each other wholly and uncontrollably at first sight, and as to thee, dost thou

think Olympia faultless? Hast thou not, flattered by her wild charms, persuaded thyself into a connection that at first appeared to thee so objectionable? A love that must overcome doubt is greater and more enduring than that other that seems as if fallen from Heaven; it is intellectual love. Thou wouldst picture to thyself a life of self-denial. Away with it! She loves thee, and at her side thou wilt find renown and happiness, honor and joy. What will give me back the pleasures that I would cast from me for the sake of truth? Truth! But must I be her slave? I alone, of so many thousands, condemn myself to give up my inborn right to the gay pleasures of life? I will deck truth with the figleaf of orthodoxy, will choose words with double meanings to save superstition; should I not thus serve truth still more? Thou wouldst serve her by lies. No, I would never speak against my convictions, but only shut them close in my breast. And the Catholic confession of faith? Olympia loves me; must I not save her? Some day in happier times it may be otherwise, but now I must obey the times. And thy father and Geronimo—they were believing Jews, but thou?"

Such thoughts disturbed Spinoza's mind, to which the ever-returning chime at the quarter hours in the quiet night made a singular accompaniment. To him life was not measured by the notes from the church tower.

Is no other way to be found? . . . .

He must have sat there a long time, for towards midnight Maessen Blutzaufer and Flyns, arm in arm like two powers holding each other in equipoise, reeling homewards, jested over the poor sinner, who, instead of seeking his mistress, cowered there in the cold night on the hard stones. Spinoza noticed nothing of what went on around him. At last he stood up, and when he looked at the place in which he had remained so long he was forced to laugh against his will; it was the church built on the model of the Temple of Jerusalem.

"Sleep sweetly," he said to himself, as he looked at Olympia's window. "I have watched over thee; thou shalt rest ever at my side."

The bells rang loudly, the organ resounded through the whole building, an innumerable throng filled the Catholic cathedral. Spinoza stood before the altar between Dr. Van den Ende and his daughter. Olympia was in bridal attire. Above, in the gallery, stood Spinoza's father, his garments rent, his countenance pale and stony. High mass began. Cecilia and Olympia knelt down, Van den Ende and Spinoza followed their example. Chisdai and the skeleton of the fat Domine were dressed as acolytes. Chisdai swung the censer, and whenever he made the sign of the cross on his brow, his fingers caught on the bridge of his nose; and when the skeleton did likewise, his fleshless fingers stuck in



the hole in which his nose once had been; and when they rang the bell, his bare ribs clattered like dry poppy-heads shaken by the wind. High mass was ended. Spinoza advanced alone, and knelt before the priest on the steps of the altar. He cursed the mother who bore him, and the father who had begotten him, because they had not taken him from his birth to the bosom of the one saving faith. A cry of grief was heard from the gallery, and a corpse was carried out. Spinoza repeated the creed in a low voice, inaudible to all but the priest. The priest laid both hands on the head of the candidate, blessed him gently, and sprinkled his brow three times with holy water. The organ broke out in joyous tones.

“Baruch, Baruch!” it now cried, “get up!” It was only a dream. Spinoza lay in his bed, and old Chaje stood before him with a light. He passed his hand over his brow; it was wet with cold perspiration.

“What is the matter?” he asked.

“Your father is dying; it would break the heart of a stone! The men from the neighborhood are already below.”

Baruch sprang hastily out of bed, dressed as much as was absolutely necessary, and ran down stairs; his father must already be very bad, for he heard the men chant in loud chorus, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one God.”

As he entered the room his father was repeating the conclusion of the prayer:

“Master of the world! Lord of pardon and mercy, it is by thy grace, my God and my fathers’ God, that my thoughts mount to the throne of thy glory, to thy goodness! Look on my trouble, for because of thine anger there is no soundness in my flesh, neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. Now, O God of pardon, grant me thy grace, and go not into judgment with thy servant. If this be indeed my hour of death, may the knowledge of thy Unity not leave my lips, as it is written in thy scriptures, ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one God!’ I confess before thee, Eternal One, my God and the God of my fathers, God of all spirit and flesh, that my recovery and my death are in thy power. It would be by thy mercy if thou shouldst allow me perfect recovery, and my thoughts and my prayers should mount unto thee like the prayer of Hezekiah in his sickness. But if the hour of my death be indeed come, may my death be the atonement for all the sins of omission and commission which I have sinned and committed in thy sight from the day of my birth. Give me my share in the Garden of Eden, and console me in the future world reserved for the pious. Show me the way of Life, make me full of joy before thy face, for at thy right hand are eternity and glory. Praised

be thou, Eternal, Hearer of prayers. Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit. Thou wilt save me, Eternal God of truth."

Baruch sat down at the bedside of his father whose breath came with ever-increasing difficulty; he clasped his son's hand whose fever heat the cold hand of death could not cool.

"Father!" cried Baruch; he could say no more.

"Pray for me, my son," said his father gently. The rattle became ever louder, every instant they thought his breath must stop; all those assembled cried incessantly:

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one God!"

The sick man prayed with them. He raised his eyes to Heaven, and with the word "one" he gave up his breath; his lips still pressed together, opened as if for a kiss—he was dead.

Rabbi Saul Morteira opened a window as a sign that the soul journeyed to Heaven, and all present repeated:

"Praised be the Righteous Judge!"

Baruch sank from his father's bed to the floor, and pressed the dead hand to his hot brow; from above in another chamber echoed the half-suppressed lamentations of Miriam and Rebecca. Those present conversed in low whispers, and were just on the point of going away, when some one was heard to mount the stairs with loud, stumbling haste. The door was thrown open.

“Is he dead?” inquired a voice.

“Hush, silence, Rabbi Chisdai!” answered those present.

“Woe, treble woe to this house!” cried Chisdai. “He alone could have yet saved his *Ben sorer umoreh*.\* I heard with my own ears that he meant to turn Christian, and marry a Christian woman.”

“If you do not go out this instant,” answered Samuel Casseres, “and if you say another such word against my brother-in-law, I will show you the way out. No one invited you.”

“You will invite me, and I shall not come,” answered Chisdai, as he was shouldered out by the others.

Benjamin von Spinoza had desired in his will that his broken old Spanish sword should be laid in the grave with him; the Rabbis objected for some time to fulfil this desire, whose meaning but few could imagine. Spinoza was obliged to bring forward many authorities from the Talmud before he could see his father’s wish fulfilled. Outside in the graveyard, in accordance with old Jewish custom, he was made to kneel down at his father’s feet, and beg forgiveness from God and his father for all in which he had sinned against them; then he must tear his garments on the left breast, and when the coffin was lowered, the son must be the

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\* Stubborn and rebellious son.

first to enter the grave, and throw a handful of earth thereon. He did all this with uncertain step and trembling hand; Chisdai sprang forward to support him.

For seven long days Spinoza was obliged to sit on the ground with rent garments and without shoes, and for thirty days he was not permitted to shave his beard; but his outward appearance was not so uncared for and torn as his inward feelings. How often as he rested his elbows on his knees, his face covered with his hands, how often he thought of Olympia. What would become of them?

His greatest trial was a visit from Oldenburg and Meyer, who came just as he was sitting on the ground with his sisters, and the Rabbis were chanting a litany or sort of mass for the dead before the congregation.

He thought much about the free, unfettered life he would make for himself. Desire for rest and contemplative solitude often rose in him like an overwhelming homesickness; he felt imprisoned by the tumult of the world and its ways. And again he saw how his whole former life had been beset by difficulties. He would strive for consistency; should he find it in union with Olympia or not, it was at least a painful consolation that the unmitigated opposition of his father no longer stood between them.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### STILL LIFE.

SPINOZA was walking thoughtfully down the Kalverstraat, when some one said, "Ha, ha! how proud we are!"

Spinoza turned round; it was Frau Gertrui Ufmsand who was looking out of her ground floor window.

"How are you?" she said. "You look as sour as vinegar. I have only seen you once in this street since Magister Nigritius died, and that was a fortnight ago. You passed with Olympia van den Ende. I said 'Good evening' twice, but you were better employed, neither of you either heard or saw me. Those were fine times, were they not, when you came every day to the Magister? But you have grown twenty years older since those days. Ah! we have gone through a deal with our apartments since then. First we had a painter, who went to vespers in the church where clinking glasses are the bells, then he would come home a full fool and awake us out of our beauty sleep. Then we had a widow who would have skinned a flint, and looked so sharply after us all day we could hardly breathe before her. It was my hus-



band—he is a queer fellow—who at last gave her notice. I never said anything to her, but said to my Klaas, ‘She is a widow, we must excuse her.’ The beautiful little room has now stood empty for half a year, and we have just had it fresh painted; it is all fresh done up, and looks like a little chapel. I never like to go up the stairs to it.”

“Geert, be so good as to shut the window, the bits all fly in my eyes. If you want to talk to the gentleman, go out and let him in,” cried a gruff voice from inside the room.

“Come in for a bit,” said Gertrui shutting the window. Spinoza went in and said he should be glad to take the room, as, to do his work, he must either be in an open place or high up for a good light. The good people thought at first he was jesting, and were greatly rejoiced when they found he was in earnest. Gertrui showed him the little room, on whose floor the fine sand was artistically sprinkled like a lace pattern. The little bed in a recess, like the berth of a ship, was empty.

“Look,” said the woman, “that is the old Magister’s armchair; I washed and dusted everything; there is not a speck on it now. I can find you everything but a bed; I use all my beds for the apprentices. Here the Magister kept his books; you can put your books there now. Have you the same bad habit as the blessed Magister of laying all your books in sight on the tables, chairs and

stools, and not letting any of them be moved without a regular storm? Did you never see that beautiful white Amaryllis that the blessed Magister was so fond of? It disappeared from the day of his death, though such animals generally stick to a house, not to the people in it. I would give a good deal to see it back again; I should be sorry from my heart if anything happened to it. Ay, and it was so knowing, it could tell to a minute when the raw meat was brought, and we were never bothered with mice."

Spinoza regretted he had nowhere seen the cat.

If we have again given too much space to the chatter of an old woman, we may bear with her loquacity a little in consideration of the motherly care which she took of our philosopher.

Spinoza, whose two brothers-in-law found themselves deceived in their expectations, was obliged to take legal means for the division of his father's inheritance. When he had obtained his legal rights he voluntarily gave up his share, keeping only a single bed with its necessary hangings, which he had taken with his work-bench and his few books and clothes to the house of Klaas Ufmsand. Here at last he was permitted to order his outer life in perfect conformity with the requirements of his spiritual nature. The serene equanimity derived from conviction, which opposes tranquil delibera-

tion to the stormy excitement of the decisive moments of existence, as well as to the annoyances and the restless struggles of every-day life; that self-dependence, won by cheerful renunciation of the intoxications of empty, exhausting pleasures; that exaltation and satisfaction in the kingdom of intellect, a peace of mind won after hot conflict, a clear penetration of the world, whose enigmas were solved, and eternal laws discovered; these were the benefits which he made ever more plainly and firmly his own in solitude.

From early morning he sat working at his bench. As he snipped a piece from his glass with the sharp diamond, he broke an idea off from the great system that lay complete though undeveloped in himself. When he worked the leaden plate and gave the glass its proper form the idea in him gained firmer shape, and so on through all the stages; ever more distinct the form, ever more transparent the material. Many splinters must fall, many rough places be smoothed, till at last the truth should be reflected in the mirror. When he had earned his bread by the day's handiwork, in the quiet night by his single lamp he placed his finely polished ideas before him, collected the dust which had fallen from them, and strewed it thereon, that they became opaque; then with a light hand wiped it off, and proved that it did not necessarily belong there, and that he had but hidden the light, not ex-

tinguished it. So worked, so philosophized Benedict de Spinoza.

Not long after his withdrawal from the busy world he had to break off some hours a day from his manual labor to lead a younger mind in the paths of philosophy. Meyer one day brought young Simon de Vries to him, who, since the short view we had of him before, had become the lucky heir of the rich results of his father's speculations in tea, and now gave himself up to quite other speculations. Spinoza took him through a course on the principles of Descartes' philosophy. In the same room where he had once learned to decline *mensa*, in the same chair in which his master had once sat to correct his exercises, he now sat to teach the philosophy of Descartes, and build yet higher on the same foundation, as the necessities of that method required. Honorable Dodimus de Vries, who had once been able to do quickly the most complicated mental arithmetic, had not only left his numerous and weighty ducats to his son Simon, but also his arithmetical readiness. This youthful talent for mathematics gave Spinoza much pleasure.

For two or three days at a time, and often much longer, he never left his room; he never willingly left the familiar solitude in which he felt so much at ease, in which the hours and days like quiet streams flowed refreshingly and animatingly past him.

Good Gertrui was very uneasy about her new lodger.

“I don't know,” she said, “whether you mean to accustom yourself to do without food, or whether the ravens from Heaven come to feed you, like the prophet in the wilderness; you cannot possibly have enough with what you have from me. Yesterday you had nothing all day long but milk soup, some butter and a little draught of beer which with the water and turf I bought comes to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  stivers, and to-day you have been satisfied the whole day with oat-meal porridge, raisins and butter, which have cost exactly the same. I calculated that in a whole month you have only at the most drunk two half pints of wine. That is neither living nor dying.”

Spinoza tried to make the good dame understand that his earnings would not suffice for greater expense, and that he was quite satisfied with his manner of living.

“Yes,” she said, “one ought only to stretch one's self according to one's counterpane, that is upright and honest; but if one can make the cover longer, is it not stupid to lie doubled under it like a shut-up clasp-knife? The many rich and great gentlemen who come in and out every day, I know well enough, would be well pleased to give you more money. It would not be like taking a present; they disturb you so often over your work that they ought



to make it good again. The servant of rich Simon de Vries has now been here three times to invite you to his house, and instead of going there to eat fresh pulpy crabs, that melt in your mouth like butter, you stay at home to your thin milk-soup. Yet for the rest you know all about everything; one can come and talk to you about anything. I can't think what has come to you that you pinch yourself so."

The good dame would not be convinced by any arguments.

"Learned folk have always some queer notion or another in their heads," said she, as she descended the stairs and told Oldenburg, whom she met there, the whole dispute with variations. Oldenburg, too, was much displeased with his friend's voluntary imprisonment in a cell. He was afraid that such seclusion from active life, such silent burial in the depths of his thoughts and feelings, would create a boundary within which each disturbing element would engender a sensitiveness of feeling which would reject all opposition, because it had withdrawn from it. He knew not that such weaknesses of tender and reserved souls are far removed from great and steadfast minds, who know no partiality, for they bear the whole world in their hearts, and cannot be surprised or hurt at the discords of the outer world, because they have penetrated them, and to themselves have reduced all to



harmony. Other reasons also made the anxious friend think an alteration in Spinoza's way of life desirable. Among these stood first the fear that Spinoza's love for Olympia, which he had rightly guessed, might be so deeply rooted in his mind by solitude that it would become ineradicable. He still believed that, by prudent measures, he could enter into the life of an independent mind and direct it.

"Our age," he once said to Spinoza, "the age of humanity, new born from the classics and the self-revelations of reason, has its apostles, who travel through all lands and declare their new ideas like any others. When Christianity arose, and had not yet made itself accepted anywhere, pious men came forward and preached in all places, even at peril of their lives; and in our age we have seen enthusiastic men wander from town to town, and from land to land, making known the words revealed to them in all places. Think of Giordano Bruno; he has travelled through almost the whole civilized world to support his views on all sides. Unfortunately he made the incomprehensible mistake of going back to Italy to die at the stake as a martyr for philosophy. But this way of learning to know the world and its motives and connecting forces from personal inspection, and placing it before the intelligence in living words, not trying to found and rule it from a lonely garret, is the only right

way for a true thinker. Our master, or, if you do not like to call him that, our teacher, Descartes, after a time of lonely seclusion, recognized that the truth must be extracted from the world if it would again pervade the world. He learned to know men in peace and war; he was even a soldier himself, and travelled much. And you must recognize this too as a revelation of our age, that it has been granted to our century first, in artistic recognition of silent nature, to open the mind's eye to landscape. You too must travel, and if you do not wish to teach the world you must at least learn to know it truly. You shall not want for money; de Vries and I will willingly give you all you need. You must not reject it, for it is not a present offered to a friend; we pay this tribute to science and mankind. You do more than we; you dedicate your life to it."

"If you please," answered Spinoza in a gentle voice, "if you do not intend to annoy me, let this be the last time that you make me offers of money. I explained to you and de Vries long ago that I could not accept it. Moreover, as far as I am concerned, I cannot endure this new sort of wandering philosophy which you so strongly recommend. I am no friend to disputation with this, that and the other man, and seldom see any advantage accrue from it; for what is opposed is usually not the expression of pure thoughts, but such personalities

and wilful misinterpretations that it has more to do with Peter and Paul, and what they have become by habit and inclination, than with pure intellect."

"Just why you should learn to know Peter and Paul more intimately, to conquer their prejudices, and personal bias."

"I wish to explore and ascertain the laws of human existence and intelligence. I have often explained to you already that I do not set myself to discover the errors of others. If these are revealed by the revelation of the natural law so much the better. You, by your profession, must concern yourself for others; to me it is given to search in the book of history and the workings of my own life."

"That you should do," answered Oldenburg, "and to do so you should investigate the world in the whole, as well as in detail. Let me take your handiwork, these glasses, as a metaphor. Were our eyes microscopically arranged, we should look at only a single part, never at a whole; were our eyes only for a distant prospect, we should never know the peculiarities of things. Thus it is the prerogative of human intellect to accommodate by art both the microscopic and telescopic views of things to its own assigned natural mediocrity; and in conclusion by imagination, by thought, to recognize them in their conditions; but this the large and small views must precede. It is thus with our

knowledge of human life. So travel and live for yourself."

"Leave me to my homely four walls," answered the philosopher. "The world of appearances is well enough investigated and described by others for us to follow its laws by quiet observation. I am ever myself in my cell here, and strive to collect around me all the spirits of truth. Believe me, it is a numerous and goodly company, and I am never alone or desolate; and if I am alone with myself, I can investigate more quietly and uninterruptedly the mingled elements and connecting links of the human mind. He who from the height of a bird's flight can take in with his eye how one stream flows into another, and at last all flow into the sea, can see no more than is offered to the quiet glance when it follows the inner cross currents of the mind. Yes, he who can live quietly alone with his own mind—with a mind that is controlled or influenced by nothing foreign to itself—he lives again in Paradise, happy in himself and in the universe."

Oldenburg's eyes had never yet sparkled as they did now; there was a thrill of reverence and ecstasy perceptible in his usually firm voice and in his whole deportment as he rose and said:

"O friend! what can we say to you who have all things in yourself? And yet perhaps a call from without may yet be a motive to you. See, it is not for naught that the legends of all people say that

gods became men, allowing themselves to be confined by the limits and powers of human existence, in order to raise themselves freely from it, and raise others with them, even though it should be by a death of torture. You too must offer yourself as a sacrifice by following the call of the truth given to you. You will not take me for the dying thief on the cross, and I will only echo the words which the world may say of your life and thoughts: if you possess knowledge of the truth—they will say—and if you are its open and unreserved confessor, come forth from your quiet solitude, come forth into active life, declare, and suffer for it."

With his hands folded on his breast Spinoza answered:

"To die for a recognized truth is blessedness that knows no pain. What is a long life to that ecstasy which existence itself and the devotion of it to the witness of truth gives could it but convince others? But a martyr's death proves nothing to others. Men have gone joyfully to death for the most opposite convictions. I myself once knew what is called a believing Jew, who, in the midst of the flames, when men believed him already dead, chanted the Psalm 'Into Thy hands I commend my spirit,' and breathed out his soul in song. What could a life of every day returning duties, refinements and pleasures prevail against the one all-inclusive act of devotion? But if external pres-



sure does not conquer the man standing firm for his knowledge of faith, neither does his death, which is after all only an external proof, convince others. If I, as I hope, may one day so far have cultivated myself as to be able to teach others, I shall have no laws to give them, no rounded sentences to inculcate; each one must find his laws in himself and in the world. The recognition of the laws innate in nature, that is the salvation of himself and of the world. The character, the conscious development of its natural laws, the appropriate direction of its actions, and free acceptance of the thus necessitated fate, this is the prerogative of humanity, which cannot be taught and cannot be transferred, which can only be attained by individual work in self."

After these words the two friends stood by each other in silent reflection, and on this elevation of thought they again felt the pleasure of regarding the world with one and the same view. Neither knew or wished to know who was giver, who receiver; they were one soul and one heart, and yet each saw himself reflected in the other. As Oldenburg went away he felt deeply the awe-inspiring power his friend's mind had over him. It seemed audacious in him to wish to control here; he could but give his hand, and lend outward support to the inner independent necessities. He felt blessed in the power for such masculine friendship, sprung



from the foundation of pure intellect, that had made devotion to this another personal pleasure.

What can love offer more, and should the thinker, happy in himself, not be satisfied with friendship alone? Spinoza felt more and more at home in the peaceful serenity of his life, whose equable happiness can be called nothing else than blessedness. For the exercise of the intellect in solitude is the highest felicity of life—near to the eternal sun, above the tumult of the world, above the clouds which float in the atmosphere of the earth. In solitude life is explained; there no cry from without is possible, nothing to break the stream of the thinking existence. And what first appeared as will fortifies itself into self-sustaining endurance. Thoughts flow together like a chorus of saved spirits and carry the physically imprisoned soul with them. Set free and forgotten is the mortal self, and life becomes thought.

What disturbs in the present and in uncongenial contact wins a milder meaning, and awakens a gentle conciliation in the mind that is inspired by a love of truth and rectitude, and that no reproach can drag down. It was like an awakening from that unconscious life, which yet had moved in the immaterial paths of thought to the inner development of himself, and the consideration of himself, and his relation to the outer world.

When Spinoza so abstracted himself from all per-

sonal considerations in the pure exercise of thought he was often surprised at the recollection that it was some days since he had seen Olympia, even since he had thought of her, and yet he loved her with his whole heart. It was not stormy, demonstrative love with its overwhelming passions; it was the quietly growing inclination whose roots rest in conviction, and the clear knowledge of the necessity of the relationship. This love, however, had its surprises and enigmatical self-torments as well as any other which is torn by storms of passions. His heart throbbed and swelled with love afresh whenever he went to Olympia's house; and not seldom he left it with an agitated mind, which only recovered itself in his beloved solitude. Would he really conquer his love for Olympia, or would he merely go through a probation with it? He spoke more than ever of his Judaism, and in many other ways, indeed, he strove to place himself in an undesirable light; and yet he was pained again when he appeared to have gained his end, and Olympia—whether from coquetry or to exercise a right of retaliation—accorded all manner of trifling favors to the light-haired Kerkering, by which he felt in the highest degree honored, and became yet more settled in his conviction that Spinoza was only a man of straw put there to tease him. Since that eventful evening the two lovers had not conversed alone, otherwise misunderstandings and mistakes

would easily have been explained; but even exposed to the eyes of the uninitiated observers they enjoyed the raptures of the inexpressible felicity of love. Often as their lips said the most indifferent things their eyes spoke all the feelings which they fostered in secret, hidden for one another.

## CHAPTER XX.

### CONFESSIONS.

THE Jews are sounding the alarm after you; they look upon you as a deserter, and want to bring you back to their standard," said Oldenburg to Spinoza as he entered the room with Meyer.

"Don't be afraid," said Meyer, "you have climbed so high above them that they will be out of breath before they catch you."

"How would it be," continued Oldenburg, "if, while they are in pursuit, you enlisted under another flag, and dressed yourself in another uniform?"

"But you once lauded Turenne for not doing so," answered Spinoza, "and I should not know what uniform to adopt."

"You are right there," said Meyer; "if I had a uniform to cut out for you I should use the whole heavens for the purpose, and hang the sun and moon on your breast for orders." They laughed, and Oldenburg began again:

"What is the use of skirmishing? We must take the thing by the throat. Meyer, from his hia-tro-mathematical heights, always maintains that the efforts of reason should be directed towards the

rooting out of all dogmatic creeds, and especially the authority of the Bible. Luther, he says, has overturned traditional creeds, but has set us down on the barren sand of mere verbal inspiration. He even quotes you, and says you think nothing of the prophets or sacred history."

"If he does he is wrong. I think the prophets, with their visions and inner revelations, which we may call direct divine gifts, may probably recognize the truth as plainly as the clearest judgments of reason. It is only because the former remains on the lowest step of perception that it is more exposed to error than pure reason. Theology and philosophy are not opposed to one another; they merely rest on different foundations. I am convinced of the eternal and inextinguishable utility of the so-called sacred histories for the common people. He who believes in them and rules his life in accordance has succeeded as heir to a great accumulation of truths proved by experience, to which the small body of men who cannot simply believe in them can only attain by their own unassisted powers of thought. Both are fortunate, the latter the most fortunate, because they themselves discover the collected laws of nature. The Bible cannot pretend to such universal application, and has never done so; it is a slowly accumulated work which includes much extraneous matter; its aims are not learning and thought, but faith and

action; and that is why we ought first to comprehend how we can create anything as good, and yet more definite, by our own innate intellectual powers."

"Look there! There is my 'original sin' again," interrupted Meyer. "Firstly, they say, 'Human nature is originally and thoroughly bad, and cannot understand higher things.' Then they say that 'a supernatural revelation is necessary to save them from this situation.' They cut a leg off human nature and triumphantly exclaim, 'Look, it cannot walk or stand alone, so we must make a false leg, and look after its joints every Sunday, that mankind may run again with it for seven days.'"

"Meyer, you are always trying to enrich the inheritance of original sin," said Oldenburg. Then, turning to Spinoza he continued, "Tell me openly, are you not convinced that Judaism is obsolete and narrow?"

"You ask a great deal; but I must first repeat, that no creed offers us that true felicity which springs only from knowledge of the innate necessities of our natural laws. As things are now no man, whoever he may be, whether Christian, Turk, Jew, or heathen, is really recognized as such, but only judged according to his manners and customs, because he goes to this or that church, clings to this or that expression, or swears by the words of this or that master. The only decisive measure at



last of all is individual character. That is why the professors of one and the same creed, ay, often the professors of one and the same philosophical system, incline to such different forms of individual and social life. As for Judaism now, it recognizes a godly life quite independent of the revelation of the law. Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were all esteemed godly, though they lived long before the revelation on Sinai. Moses, by means of his sublime and divine gifts, gave the law to the people as a right, as a constitution. This is destroyed. The primeval right to found divine laws on individual recognition appears in Judaism too with universal application."

"The Jews always appear to me as a remarkable phenomenon of history," said Meyer. "The Jews must exist as long as there is a dogmatic religion in the world. The wonderful tenacity with which they have endured the most fearful blows of fate must prove that their mission is not yet fulfilled, and that in the course of history they will once more be a mighty lever."

"Such abnormal developments please you," said Oldenburg, and Spinoza replied:

"Nothing is abnormal; everything has its definite cause, from which it must arise necessarily and logically in its destined order. If the ordinances of their religion did not rob them of their manliness, I should unhesitatingly affirm that the Jews,

as is quite possible in the whirling wheel of human affairs, would one day, when the opportunity occurred, again obtain their kingdom, and God would choose them anew. We have an example in the Chinese, who have again won their kingdom. But the mission of the Jews is fulfilled. There is nothing wonderful in their preservation; it is only the hatred of all nations that has preserved them, and they have set themselves apart from all nations by their customs. These customs may disappear like all other laws of ceremonial, which have only a local signification, and the hatred of the nations may change to love."

"I should be proud to be a Jew," said Meyer. "He is born in such decided opposition to all commonplace, and in himself represents exactly the schism which now rends the heart of humanity. The free Jew, who has cut loose from his own already torn traditions is the only unbiassed stranger in the world, armed with all the weapons of the masculine intellect, and yet with the unclouded eyes of childhood, capable of examining and surveying the world as given in history; a privilege and a freedom none other can attain to as easily. We others have too much share in the ruling of the world, and too much partiality for and familiarity with it. And already in the great current of history it is seen that the renewing of the whole world has not been done by the domi-

nant nations. Neither a Greek nor a Roman produced the new world-saving doctrine; it came from the despised, oppressed people, who were shut out from the world's current. In ancient times men lived in perfect uniformity of faith; the religion was the constitution, the constitution was the religion. It was so in Rome and Athens, in Egypt and China, and most perfectly so in Palestine. With the destruction of the Jewish state and the entrance of Christianity originated religion as such, for it was then first cut loose from the state. There were henceforward two powers who took men in charge, and robbed them of uniformity, the State and the Church. Christianity has till now, by the papal power, endeavored to reunite the two; the power of the Pope is now broken, the old division is again there. Christianity does not assign the constitution."

"I think we have exchanged the rôles," replied Spinoza; "Christianity does not apply to nations and States, but to humanity, to all mankind, to make them internally free; it could never be an external law. By means of our recognition of our natural laws we can and must regulate State and Church; in both we must leave room for the investigating minds who bring everything in question, otherwise we again lay our freedom under the bonds of external laws. The religious and political additions made to Christianity from time to time

have only been temporary. When Christ says, 'Whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also' (a rule of behavior that is also given in the Lamentations of Jeremiah), it can only refer to a time of oppression and lawlessness; otherwise it is according to reason and duty to give him who giveth thee a blow two in return; or to bring him who would sue thee at the law to justice, that the rogues may not make a successful game of their roguery."

"With such views as these," said Oldenburg, "I should not long hesitate in acknowledging myself of the Christian religion; you need not do it from conviction of the dogmas. Therefore if I were you I should join the larger and more cultivated majority, who have moreover the greatest power of influencing the history of their time. It is not vanity in a man to have an ugly excrescence removed from his face; he only fulfils his duty to others and himself by removing everything detrimental."

"And I," said Meyer, "would neither respect nor value you from that day forward; you would be a traitor to yourself. But I hear you are in love with the saintly Olympia. What a universally tolerant young lady that is! First she had a Catholic, and then a Protestant, for lovers; now she has a Jew, and, I presume, in Kerkering a Lutheran, as co-admirers; if she has done with you both I will charter her a Turk."

“Jest and mockery are your original sins,” replied Spinoza gravely; “but I request that you will speak with respect of Olympia.”

“Ah! the learned Olympia!” laughed Meyer, “she can conjugate *amo* perfectly in the preterit; but I must be grave. First a painter, who lived for two months in these rooms, was bewitched by her. He was a very young man of great talent and overflowing vivacity. I used to go very often to the Van den Ende’s house myself then, and confess that I had not a little to do with Van den Spyck’s severing the connection. But if I had known beforehand what would result I would have had nò hand in it, for Van den Spyck took to drinking, and sank lower and lower till he could stay here no longer, but now wanders unsteadily about the world. Both Van den Spyck and Olympia turned their anger on me, so I went no more to my old colleague’s house. Olympia’s second lover was her music-master; he swam perpetually in clear melody, and was never to be seen without a music-book under his arm, and wherever he went or stayed his fingers moved as if he were playing the organ. I believe he came into the world with a sheet of music under his arm, and that his first cry was in D major. Ah! he revelled with Olympia in the kingdom of tones. It was the bass voice of her father that drove him out of Paradise. Imagine the bathos! The man should at least



have made a finale with a pistol-shot. Cruel ! not a week passed before the musical key opened another lock, and he was engaged to the daughter of the director of the concert hall. He succeeded to his father-in-law's post, and now lives a comfortable citizen 'andante' with his musical better half. I shall see now what will become of you."

Spinoza walked moodily up and down the room, with the same feelings as when Chisdai defiled the fair image of Olympia with such bigoted zeal.

"I can't understand you," said Oldenburg; "indeed you delude yourself if you think you love her. Your peace of mind and self-concentration in thoughts that have no reference to love would be impossible if the true fire of passion burned in your veins."

"Do you know all the peculiarities of love in different individuals, that you speak so decidedly on the subject?" asked Spinoza.

"I know love; and even if I were more passionate than many others, still I know its eternal origin, which is and must be the same with every one. My acquaintance with Olympia dates from my own love-story. Maria was a friend of Olympia's. No man ever loved more truly than I. I looked with pity and scorn on ordinary men, who from day to day could think of other things, follow a favorite profession, study physic, prepare enactments, or write commercial letters; and then, when the day's



work was finished, or a Sunday stood in the calendar, take a walk with the beloved one. These excellent, self-contained souls, how narrow and cold they seemed to me, who thought no other thoughts, and felt no other feeling but love alone. I had won a new soul with an unalterable sameness, for the one perpetual thought was of her and of her alone. When I drew the sweet breath of Maria's presence, or remained in my distant home, her soul was always with me. Wherever I was I thought, Soon she will be here with thee; thou wilt call her thine own. I often trembled at the infinite, overwhelming magnitude of this happiness. It was too great; I could not have borne it. I was shamefully deceived in my love and in my better feelings. Love another! I cannot and dare not wish to. If it is denied me to pour out my soul in that first fiery passion, I despise any well-behaved citizen love. I am glad that I am too old to be exposed to such another temptation. I have found a sphere of usefulness, and peace is in that."

"Marriage is a sacred and eternal law of nature," replied Spinoza. "It is the fairest crown of humanity, if it is made from pure inclination recognized by reason."

"I will not attack matrimony," answered Oldenburg, "but the curse that rests on mankind the more it develops is that it is always more and more impossible to partake of the pleasure exactly when

nature requires it. What are art, science and industry? May they all be destroyed if mankind is not to—”

“He can live according to nature,” interrupted Spinoza, “who has early learned to master his passions, and to act in accordance with the eternal laws of reason. For this they should not appear as external and arbitrary, otherwise the power of the passions will often win in the conflict. But if, by our recognition of the law of reason, we have seen the worthlessness of all power and all indulgence of the passions, we shall lead such a life as our true nature exacts.”

“It is not given to every man,” answered Oldenburg, “to turn his back on the world, or rather to hover above it all in the heaven of his own consciousness. There are wild and stormy spirits who, by mere happy indifference, retain their enjoyment in this world of weighty trifles, of necessary tyranny, and can be kept from madness and despair.”

In a mild tone Spinoza led the conversation to its source again by saying:

“I do not turn my back on the world as you think; I fully enjoy it in my own way.”

“And you deceive yourself if you think you will enjoy it more with Olympia.”

“Oldenburg, you have too high-flown notions of matrimony,” remarked Meyer. “Believe me, I now have a second wife, and live in great contentment.

Men are neither so happy in marriage as fancy hopes, nor so unhappy as it fears. I knew my second wife but little before our marriage. We learned to know each other and accommodate ourselves to one another afterwards. What men dream about harmony of minds is not practicable. My wife, for example, is truly pious, and yet we live united. Indeed, I should not like her not to be so. That quiet faith gives women a special charm. I have two fine, healthy boys, a well-ordered household, and may say that I live happily."

"You know I respect and honor Olympia," said Oldenburg, "but I must advise you against a union with her. I interfere in the affair most unwillingly, and would give it up now, if I did not know your enviable power of keeping yourself pure and uninfluenced by all opposition. Let yourself be dissuaded. It is not Olympia's first love affair. The first dew of heaven is gone, her lips have already kissed others, her heart has already throbbed for another, and—you must not be angry with me for saying it—what you feel for her is not true love; otherwise you could not possibly act with this peaceful equanimity."

"I must, however, repeat," replied Spinoza, "that there is nothing truly desirable which reasonable deliberation cannot comprehend as thoroughly and more permanently than enthusiasm and unrestrained passion."

“Something else occurs to me,” said Meyer. “Would it be, to express it from a legal point of view, permissible for Jews and Christians to intermarry?”

“No Rabbi on earth could bring forward an absolute prohibition. Christians are, from a Jewish point of view, merely regarded as a Jewish sect. That their numerical power in the course of events has become greater makes no difference to the fact. We have sects among the Jews, even individual Talmudists, who consider faith in a Messiah as immaterial and not among the necessary laws of their religion. A union between Jews and Christians cannot be forbidden.”

“As long as such intermarriages are unusual,” resumed Meyer, “the detestation connected with the name of Jew will not be generally uprooted. I could almost be in favor of this union. It would seem so glorious to me to be the Jewish redeemer in this case. But no, you must not only be a Jew, you must remain a bachelor. It is only thus that you fulfil your mission. Whoever takes upon himself family ties and social obligations, his straightforward, strictly logical orderings of life and thought are split up and interrupted. Distraction and interruption enter of necessity, and I can already see in my own profession what it is to let my thoughts be turned hither and thither by the thousand changing chances of life. The steady, uninterrupted stream

between the thinking mind and the one thought which you set before you is thus perpetually crossed and interrupted; the natural heat flows away, cools, and must perpetually be relighted. So congratulate yourself that you are born a Jew, and are a bachelor by fate and free-will."

For the first time Spinoza was glad when his two friends took leave. Of all the inclinations of man love of woman is the most like faith. Its true foundation is only in the individual personality, whose precise view of the case, known to no other, makes it sacrilege to interfere. Why should Spinoza be possessed by a love which was in such opposition to the world, and therefore gave every one, and especially his friends, a right to pry into it? A less steadfast and unworldly because less truth-loving nature would have had his softer sentiments destroyed by such encroachments, and have become bitter against his friends, or self-distrustful. Spinoza learned by his clear intelligence to acquire here too that devotion which men usually ascribe to the direct influence of sentiment.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### MICROCOSMOS.

A HEART accustomed to suppress all stormy ebullitions, to gain the even pulsation and moderation of expression that is as far removed from dull stupidity as from extremes of joy and sorrow, in such a life we do not meet with dizzy heights or dark depths that fill the sympathetic spectator sometimes with painful horror at the threatened ruin, and sometimes with quiet satisfaction at the safety gained.

Our hero has not lost himself for love of a woman, but his better life is endangered by it. He has no one to fight with but with himself, with his natural and acquired relations. Such noiseless combat, however, excites the pulses of the internal powers all the more that it is wanting in the tangible opposition that rouses combativeness. No visible kingdom will be revolutionized by the rise and fall of our hero, but a kingdom of the mind, with wide-spreading influence, is brought into jeopardy. In the quiet, unadorned garret in the Kalverstraat, Amsterdam, the conflict will be decided.

Work and quiet contemplation alone are what we shall observe. By earliest dawn we find our



philosopher awake at his bench. He has again, as Frau Gertrui expresses it, "taken the day in the eye;" he smiles at this remark, perhaps it means something else to him. If the wheel and the pencil are silent the room is as quiet as the grave, the world is shut out.

What raises expectation in his face to-day, and why does he look so often at the window corner?

He does not live so much alone as we supposed. He has a companion in a cell made by itself in a corner of his room, for whose daily bread he has to provide. Look, he has caught a fly; he takes his microscope, and going to the window throws the captured animal into the web. We too will look through the microscope; perhaps we shall be able thus to follow the observations of the philosopher.

Look how the lonely spider springs out of its den. In spite of its eight eyes its sense of sight must be imperfect, for it does not get out of the way, however near an object is placed to it; but it must have exceedingly fine sensation, for it feels the slightest movement of the net. Or, perhaps, the net still retains a living link with its spinner? Look how swiftly it throws itself on the struggling prey, surrounds it with long hairy legs, squeezes it and kisses it with the strong proboscis. "That is right, guard yourself, bravely done, but the web! The next crash it is through. There! the hind feet folded on the back and prepared for flight.

Alas ! the left wing is torn, it cannot get away, and the devouring enemy is again approaching; now it is seized and carried off to the den. It is all over; it pulls the feet out, and spins its fine web fast all round; it has broken the head from the trunk and sucks the inside out. What comfortable enjoyment ! How it refreshes itself ! Then it pauses, and then sets to again to gnaw, as if it knew that it was a higher providential power that sent the cooked pigeon flying into its mouth. The spider certainly thinks the whole race of flies was created for its benefit, and everything is good in so far as it is of the nature of fly, and fills the pouch of the spider. Now it looks as if it prayed to me. Or are the wind and the broom its idols, since it has experienced that they can lay its house in ruins ? There, it is finished; the bare skeleton is all that is lying there ; it creeps back still further into its corner; its work is ended, since it is satisfied."

The philosopher laid the microscope aside, took up the Bible lying before him, opened at Chap. xxx. of the Proverbs of Solomon and read: " Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die: Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me ": . . . " There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise: The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer; the conies are

but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks; the locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands; the spider taketh hold with her hands and is in kings' palaces."

The Bible explains in its own way nature and her propensities, human history and its own wars of extermination. Everywhere an endless successive war of destruction. Force rules in nature, innocent of motive, and in the kingdom of nature might and right are one, and men have fixed laws to protect them from one another, and these laws again only derive their influence from their legitimate power; the divine privilege of man, however, is to be a law unto himself in conscious comprehension of his own nature, which prescribes him peace with himself and the world. In the name of these given laws, divine and human, thousands condemn and devour each other, and what should unite them divides them. Will it ever be possible to establish the power of the law on virtue and love?

Let us congratulate ourselves that to-day we are fortunate enough to find Spinoza undisturbed, for yesterday he had to sustain a sharp conflict. Frau Gertrui came to the door with a broom, just as he was laughing aloud at the fight of a fat bluebottle with the spider.

"Do the Jews too think the spiders bring luck?" she asked. "You are so orderly, just the opposite in that of the blessed Magister, of which I am truly

glad. I will not kill the spider—God forbid—only drive it away. I am quite ashamed when the good gentlemen come to see you; what will they think? It must be a fine housekeeper that never brushes the spiders' webs away."

For a neat Dutchwoman, in her care for the blank cleanliness of her house, you cannot easily find a greater enemy than a spider. It was very unwillingly that Frau Gertrui set any limits to her zeal for scouring. It was no use the philosopher explaining how very clean spiders were; and she was not even pacified by Spinoza telling her he would explain to all his visitors that it was he who kept the webs there. She maintained, moreover, that he could not be a true Dutchman if he could live in a room with a spider's web.

Let us see, meanwhile, how he ends his day. Till night he worked and then jotted down his worked-out thoughts on paper. He had strained both head and hands this day and felt the need of speech. He took his lamp in his hand and went down to his landlord. When he entered the room Klaas and Gertrui were sitting at the table with folded hands; their grandson, Albert Burgh, was reading the evening prayers aloud. Spinoza sat down in a corner till the prayers were finished, then drew his chair to the table and conversed with the rest. Klaas complained that the new fashions ruined everything; the button-makers were gradu-

ally losing their livelihood because smaller and fewer buttons were worn. Spinoza had consolation for everything, and the people felt much comforted by his conversation.

“Tell me,” asked Klaas, “how it is—you are not old in years and have not seen much of the world—how is it you know so well and so quickly what is in the hearts of common men? Before we had been a week here I felt as if we had eaten a bushel of salt together.”

Spinoza explained that the human heart is the same in all circumstances, and that he who really knows himself can judge of and understand aright the movements of the hearts of other men in other circumstances.

“When you speak like that,” said Frau Gertrui, “my mind feels as Sunday-like as if I were listening to a sermon; the blessed Domine Plancius used to preach just like you in the Oudekerk. Did he not, Klaas? I have often said so. Our dear Herr von Spinoza has such a Christian mind; he has nothing of the Jew about him; he is not a bit like the other Jews, and he is not a Jew.”

“Geert, when your tongue is set going it chatters on whether it is wise or stupid,” said Klaas. “You must not take it ill of her, sir; she does not mean ill.”

“You know well enough how it is meant; I only say you are not what the Jews are; so—so—well, you know what I mean,”



“Oh, yes; and I am not vexed at all.”

“Each one stick to his creed,” said Klaas, “and he who is brave and upright may be saved by any faith; all men are God’s children.”

“But you are a child of the devil,” said little Albert, who had been listening quietly to Spinoza; “you have crucified our Saviour, and will go to hell.”

Klaas stretched across the table and would have boxed the boy’s ears; Frau Gertrui and Spinoza prevented him.

“Stupid child!” said the former; “this gentleman did not do it; others did it who have had their reward long ago.”

Spinoza took the struggling boy on his knee and explained to him that it was no sin to be a Jew, since Christ and his apostles were Jews. The Jews had certainly not done right to slay Christ on the cross, but things had gone ill enough with them, and men cannot do penance forever for a fault.

“By your leave,” said Klaas, “you have not quite the right view of it. Our Saviour was obliged to die on the cross because it was foreordained of God the Father, and he could only become our Saviour by so doing.’

“Even according to this Calvinistic view,” replied Spinoza, “the Jews were still more innocent. You must never believe, dear Albert, that God would damn a man forever.”



On this last point also he had to maintain a controversy with Klaas, and especially on the passage in the Bible, "The Son of Man goeth as it is written of him; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born!" (Matt. xxvi. 24). But the dispute ended quietly.

"Why have you not a great beard?" asked Albert shyly, stroking Spinoza's chin; "in your country all men have long beards."

"In my country? Where do you think I was born?"

"In Jerusalem, or do you come from Nazareth? Oh, tell me something about it; it must be so lovely there."

"I do not come from Canaan, my dear boy. I was born here in Amsterdam, as you were also."

"That is a lie; you are a Jew. Is he not, grandfather? The Jews all come from Canaan."

"Not for a long time now; they have been with us for longer than we can remember; and when the Saviour comes again and begins his thousand years' reign he will take all the Jews back to Palestine."

"Then I should like to be a Jew too. I want to go with him."

"Be glad you are not one, boy," said Spinoza; "we have long to wait for the millennium."

"What was your father called?"

“Benjamin.”

“But he was not Jacob’s youngest son. Jacob was a nice man. I should have been ashamed to have him for a grandfather; he deceived his brother Esau and his father-in-law Laban, and his descendants stole the Egyptians’ gold and silver.”

“Be so good as to give the boy a couple of sound slaps for me,” said Klaas.

“Not I,” answered Spinoza. “He is a little Bible hero. But don’t forget, child, neither with Egyptian gold nor with Christ’s crucifixion have the Jews anything more to do; and you must always remember that the apostles, too, were Jews.”

“Geert, put the boy to bed, or else we shall never get rid of him.” For once a highly reasonable speech of Klaas Ufmsand. Spinoza with difficulty obtained a hand from little Albert, but dare not kiss him for the world. For some time longer Spinoza sat talking with Master Klaas till he yawned more and more frequently and openly, then they separated.

“You have come to a capital punishment,” said Spinoza one day at noon to Oldenburg, as he entered. “In that box I have been starving a folio edition of a garden spider for several days, and there is another empty wretch. I too have a talent for diplomacy, and mean to set a war of extermination going.”

He half filled a bowl with water, unscrewed a

flat plate from the work-bench, placed it in the vessel, and the two spiders on the leaden island. Each of the spectators armed himself with a microscope.

“Look,” said Spinoza; “if there is a spirit wholly independent of the world hovering over it it is thus that he would watch, as we are now doing, over the little conflicts on the earth.”

“We must give the two sides names,” said Oldenburg. “The garden spider shall be Alexander, the other Darius. Look! Alexander sends out his scouts far and wide; Darius flies, but it is of no use, the sea surrounds him. Both pause for a while, but Alexander arises and presses forward. Look, how he throws his arms round his adversary, but he defends himself vigorously; now they rise to the conflict. How they seize and squeeze each other, how their probosces tear at one another! If I could only see their eyes properly. Bravo! Alexander is down, but his long arms press powerfully against the scaly breast of his adversary. Now he has torn himself loose. Look how he rushes with fresh courage to choke his enemy! His fall was only a Parthian flight; now is the time. Oh, it is all over, they are letting each other go.”

“Be quiet,” said Spinoza. “That is only a truce, and if it were sworn to by all the gods, they would break it like men as soon as they had gathered strength for a new fight. Am I not right in assert-

ing that everything depends on the standpoint and position of the pupil? The buffalo mangling the grim tiger with his horns till he lies crushed to death before him is not greater than this spider in fight. Nothing is in itself great, nothing in itself small, only, because it appears so to us, we would make it so. If men were not curbed by higher reason, and allowed themselves to be governed only by their ruling passions, they would destroy each other like these animals."

"Indeed this combat is as great as those of men. When in war a thousand fiery messengers send out death, when the ground trembles and the swords flash, drenching themselves in the blood of men, we feel so great in our scorn of death, so almighty in the exercise of strength, we think we could stir the world from its axis, and what is it? A little ant-hill's inhabitants fighting with grasshoppers—"

"The eternal peace has already come to its mortal end," interrupted Spinoza. "Look how they whet their weapons, now bravely at it again!"

The two friends watched the result of the combat without further conversation. Oldenburg had not given the parties their right names, for the garden spider after a short resistance was devoured by the other, head and hair and all. Darius was borne in triumph on the leaden island to where he had spun himself a royal tent.

"Ordinary life has many turns and twists of deep

signification," said Oldenburg. "Of two people who pursue each other with inextinguishable hatred we say they are enemies like spiders."

"Your lord and master, Descartes," said Spinoza, "could have learned a great deal from these spiders. He would probably have then not brought forward a false proof of a true thing. He tries to prove the existence of God from the fact that we, who have an idea of him, exist. He takes two axioms to prove this. Firstly, 'That which can perform the greater and more difficult can also perform the lesser and less difficult.' Secondly, 'It is greater to create and preserve the substance than the attributes and qualities of the substance.' I do not know what he means by that. What does he call easy, what difficult? Nothing is absolutely easy or difficult in itself, but can only be called so with regard to its cause. We want no other example but this spider; with very little trouble it spins a web that men could not make without very great difficulty. On the other hand men do many things with ease that would perhaps be impossible to angels. What can be called absolutely easy or difficult? It would in this way be easily imaginable that men may exist without necessarily supposing the existence of God. But the existence of God, as we have said, follows necessarily and consequently on the idea of him."

Spinoza held a lengthier discussion with Olden-

burg on the subject. We have remained long enough in the house of Klaas Ufmsand, and will pause until we can again conduct Benedict to Olympia. There our story is quite in another key.



## CHAPTER XXII.

### PECULIARITIES.

KERKERING had clasped Olympia's hand, and prayed Cecilia in a jesting tone to be his godmother if he became a Catholic. He did not let loose her hand when Spinoza entered, in spite of Olympia's efforts. Spinoza stared in astonishment. Olympia blushed, she snuffed the candle, and, during the short interval of darkness, quite recovered herself, and gave Spinoza a lecture on his prolonged absence.

"I cannot understand," she said, "how a man of your age can immure himself so in a cell. Frau Gertrui told me that you had not been down stairs for the last ten days, and that you had, moreover, used a pound and a half of oil in your nightly studies. You might become a monk or a hermit without any self-sacrifice. It is a pity you are not a Catholic."

"I regret it equally; to put off the old man is easy enough, but to draw the old on anew is difficult."

Olympia was silent. Kerkering looked puzzled; he used all his powers of mind, but could not rightly understand what lay behind these words.

“It is provoking,” Olympia began again, “that we women must perpetually go in leading-strings, and never dare manage to be free. I cannot help wishing to see the room for one minute that makes the whole world unnecessary to you. Take care; I have settled it all with Gertrui. Next time you are not at home I shall come and examine everything. I must find the *arcanum* that can keep you so much to itself. You must have something extraordinary there; day by day polishing glass and studying, studying and polishing glass. Always alone, not even an organ or a lute near you; no one could endure it. But I shall find out the secret soon.”

“This time it is my turn,” answered Spinoza, “to deny you a sixth sense. If you seek through everything you are certain to overlook a companion whose heart glows for me, and whose warm breath I inhale with pleasure. But alas! this faithful companion is evanescent and frail, like all things earthly.”

“Oh, you fanatical and godless smoker! But in your place I would really leave off smoking. It is only an artificial taste, an imaginary pleasure.”

“After music nothing refreshes a weary spirit like a pipe of the American weed. Like the waves of sound in music here the waves of smoke float around us and smooth over all that is ruffled in us. When I easily and silently take a long puff at the

pipe, keep the ethereal draught a moment in my mouth, and then let it stream out in a light breath, it flatters and soothes my mouth and lips as a soft melody does my ears. You know well enough the ill effect of that damp cold grey on grey painted weather. That, if I may so call it, prickly feeling of discomfort, which then pervades our whole being, I can chase that away much better when I am surrounded by a cloud of tobacco smoke. I make myself independent of the influence of the weather, and when I watch the fleeting play of the smoke wreaths my mind gains in breadth and I feel myself so delightfully peaceful and enlightened."

"Glorious!" cried Olympia; "now, for once, I see you as an enthusiast."

"I must become enthusiastic to make you understand the worth of anything that you cannot try for yourself."

"What a pity it is you never knew my Uncle Boniface."

"Let the dead rest in peace," said Cecilia, who sat reading in the window. "What do you want with our blessed uncle?"

"It does not matter disturbing his rest a little in the other world; he had too much rest in this life and was always ill in consequence."

Cecilia did not answer, but during the ensuing conversation she retired unnoticed into the next room.

“Was your uncle, too, a priest of tobacco’s vestal fire?” asked Spinoza.

“I remember quite well now a sermon he preached five years ago in the church of St. John. He was a zealous opponent of tobacco in both forms. ‘They have noses, and smell not,’ he cried with the psalmist from the pulpit; ‘they have mouths, and taste not.’”

“‘And speak not,’ saith David,” corrected Spinoza; but Olympia continued undisturbed:

“They offer their bodies to Moloch and Baal. Each one from early morning smokes his calf’s, ox’s, or sheep’s tongue, and the vapor rises from his mouth like the reek of a sacrifice. That is why their tongues are dry when they should pray an ‘Ave Maria.’ They hourly chew the leaves of this plant of sin, as if it were heavenly manna that tasted like coriander in honeycomb; and in a while they tickle their noses with the stinking weed that Beelzebub sowed so that they can no longer smell the delightful odor of church incense. Woe! woe unto this Babylon, this Sodom and Gomorrah! But one day they will find their true reward, and will smoke merrily in hell, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth; and those who have tickled their noses will be salted with the leviathan and the other monsters in the depths of the lower world. The Lord preserve you from such chastisement. Amen!”

“Bravo!” cried Spinoza. “Pathos suits you excellently; you are a living concordance to the Bible.”

“Many thanks,” said Olympia roguishly; “do you agree with me that the priests are so zealous against tobacco because they are afraid of Ancyra?”

“Not quite, for I think that they will for long and long enough preach the same thing from the pulpit, while the domines themselves, between each of their saving phrases, will take a pinch of snuff from the gilt box on the reading desk of their pulpit. My Peter Blyning always says, when he takes a pinch fasting in the morning, that it is his spiritual breakfast.”

“It occurs to me now,” said Olympia: “do you know the horrible treatise of the wise King Solomon?”

“I know all the writings of Solomon, but I hope you do not call the ‘Preacher,’ or the ‘Song of Songs,’ horrible, and wish to banish it from the canon like the old Fathers of the Church!”

“Oh, no! I mean something quite different. My Solomon, indeed, the Presbyterians now leave to roast and steam in hell for punishment of his prophetic zeal; what grimaces he will make! I will be with you again, gentlemen, in a minute.” She took a light from the table and went out, singing as she went.

“What a wonderful, enigmatical girl!” said



Kerkering, as he sat near Spinoza in the darkness. "She is as learned as if she had ten professors in her pocket. When I hear her talk like that I feel as if—as if—I don't know what; I would rather be quite still, and only wish that she would go on talking forever. I cannot keep up with her; you are the man for her."

"Are you of that opinion too?" responded Spinoza, and a light broke in on the darkness to Kerkering.

"The people that walked in darkness saw a great light!' How does pathos suit me, Herr von Spinoza?" said Olympia, entering with a large book under her arm. "Please excuse me. I did not see that Cecilia had gone away, or I would not have left you in darkness."

"A double light appears with you," said Kerkering, perhaps referring to Spinoza's late disclosure. Olympia thanked him and opened the book.

"I think I have found something in which I can still be your teacher. Know then, that King James I. of England was called Solomon the Wise, and here is his horrible canonical treatise, '*De Peccato Mortali Fumandi Nicotianam.*' Are you ready for death, Herr von Spinoza?"

She then read a passage from the book.

"If the pious king had only known," said Olympia, "that now a man would rule over England, named Oliver Cromwell, who carries his Bible in his



sword-hilt, and yet commits the deadly sin of smoking cigars all day long! I am delighted, however, to have found your weak point at last."

"You knew that long ago," replied Spinoza, and Kerkering nodded, and bit his lips in mental assent.

"You are very unjust to music," said Olympia, "when you compare it with your hobby. Your Descartes knew that music gave us many problems to solve; his book '*Compendium Musices*' fascinated me very much. But the creation of music and its effects cannot be calculated and demonstrated in numbers. And yet music has some resemblance to mathematics, in that men created numbers, which did not exist in the world, but were imagined. And men created music, to which there was no parallel in the known world."

"The sounds we hear?"

"They have nothing to do with it. That men created and imagined a whole kingdom of inexhaustible sensations by tones makes music a miracle of the human mind as much as mathematics."

"Music moves in a course, uncircumscribed by fixed definitions," remarked Spinoza.

"How cold that sounds! When I shut my eyes and listen to good music I best comprehend myself, and men and circumstances that were before confused become clear to me. Imagine in harmony the spectacle of an endless succession of imprisoned

and struggling souls, of whom some complain, sigh and bewail, while others carol, cheer, languish and storm; soon they are united, and in infinite variety express the same thought, then are mute. Again one awakes, rises and dies gently and happily. A band again join and rage and roar, the others hasten past, the dead are aroused, till at last peace settles on all."

"Your explanation is so imaginative," said Spinoza, "that it convinces me more than ever that music is the art of the emotions, and, indeed, moves in the sensations like elements without a definite object. Anger, pain, and joy, hate and love are evinced as elementary sensations without a tangible object. I will not reject such absorptions, but I find it enough to do to understand the sensations which are tangible, and thereby if possible to control them."

"And I tell you," maintained Olympia, "your whole philosophy is a philosophy of music. Oh, if I could only express what I mean properly. You once explained to me that the peace of society depended on each one resigning, for reciprocity's sake, something of the natural rights in accordance with which man may do all that he is able, that self-preservation may become the protection of all. Now that is the law of musical harmony. One note struck alone would be quite different and sharply defined; but if it passes into harmony it must re-

sign somewhat of its nature that the notes may flow into harmony with one another, one after another rising and falling."

Spinoza looked at Olympia with sparkling eyes. How she treasured his words, and sought to bring them within her own mental sphere. He had no time to follow out his thought, that this view might be applied to their personal connection. For after a pause Olympia continued with this strange digression:

"I cannot help being annoyed, that while such extraordinary progress has been made in your art that the stars can be brought quite close to our sense of sight, why have not instruments been made to strengthen our hearing? How glorious it would be if we could hear the music of the spheres that Dante describes so divinely."

"If we accepted it as a fact that the stars move with rhythmical sound, it would do but little for our intelligence to hear them."

"Intelligence then is the measure of everything? Is not enjoyment desirable in itself? You must confess that no regular movement exists without rhythmical sound, from which I have drawn a very odd conclusion, which I will tell you, if you will promise not to laugh at me."

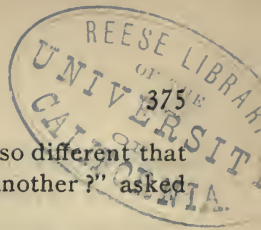
"I promise that, for I am curious to hear what conclusion seems so odd to you."

"Half a year ago my father told me that an

English physician, named William Harvey, had discovered the circulation of the blood and its laws. I am convinced that as the movement of the heart makes a sound that we can hear, the movement of the blood in our veins must make a sound too, but one which we can very seldom hear. In times when we are perfectly healthy we are in perfect harmony, in times of sickness we are discordant. I told my father that the ringing we have in our ears must surely be a note that has broken loose from the general harmony. My father considers rather that it was an acoustic illusion when we thought we heard such sounds, but I cannot accept that view. You see there is really a great truth contained in the common saying that we can hear the grass grow. All through nature there is regular movement of moisture, and wherever there is movement there is sound and tone. Among the stars, in the depths of the earth, and on the surface, there is an eternal murmur and swell and clash. Music is the soul of the universe, is our soul. All is in million-voiced harmony, and the articulation given to man is its divinest revelation."

Olympia's expression of countenance grew brighter and brighter, and Spinoza said:

"You see I do not laugh at you. I am glad you evaded so well your father's view of it, which yet you so nearly agreed with. I will not allow myself to judge so hastily of your theory."



“Why must men’s partialities be so different that they can hardly understand one another?” asked Olympia, and Spinoza replied:

“So that we should only try to convince each other on merely intellectual subjects; where this ends persecution for heresy begins. You are certainly right in your own appreciation of music, and in your love of it; but music is an example of how in matters of faith, of imagination in a word, where no fixed definition is afforded by intellectual proof, fanaticism and persecution so readily prevail. Men always become passionate where they are conscious of incapacity, and force an outward observance of what is only an internal law, an internal duty. Do not be led into taking me for a heretic to music, and banishing me from your sanctuary.”

Kerkering quickly took advantage of this turn of the conversation to ask Olympia to go to the organ; Spinoza also expressed the same desire, and it was soothing and refreshing to their overwrought minds to listen to the tones that Olympia drew, now swelling, now softly sinking, from the instrument.

It was late in the evening when Spinoza and Kerkering left. The peculiarities of character in the two lovers were plainly expressed in the fact that Olympia, fascinated by the flow of musical sound, gave herself up unrestrainedly to her feelings, and there felt the freedom of unrestrained existence; while the philosopher’s task and Spi-



noza's natural, ruling inclination was, unmisled by the stormy power of the sensations, not to let these deadening forces influence him, but to recognize their perpetual laws, and meanwhile to preserve amid all disturbances that equanimity which alone meant freedom to him.

A trifling physical peculiarity, but one which evinced a deeper tendency of disposition, might be recognized in the fact that Olympia's eyelids often blinked, while Spinoza's look was as open and steady as a child's.

It has not been yet investigated what relation such physical features have to the whole vitality and movement of the mind. May we found this observation on the case of Spinoza and Olympia: that, while the one, musical by nature, was animated momentarily by harmonious sound, the other had a steadily speculative or, as Oldenburg termed it, a plastic nature?

These diversities in their natures formed their complement and a continually growing fascination.

Whether in constant association these differences would always be as easily accommodated or not; or whether it was the duty of one whose mission was independent and all-embracing thought, to live apart from every narrowing association in the region of pure intellect? These questions were for the time suppressed, for Spinoza had to show in other ways how far he already controlled his emotions.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

### MISSIONARIES.

THE holy Jewish Church could not with indifferent eyes see one who belonged to her by birth and ritual wilfully break loose from her. She knew well enough that, if individuals were permitted to separate and live according to their own inclinations, the original Jewish tabernacle would in the future stand deserted, and no one would be found to take it on his shoulders and bear it from land to land, fixing its pillars in all kingdoms of the earth. Where men are allowed to be merely men, the gigantic edifice of the Church is tottering. The lords of the Christian Church, as well as of the Jewish, who call themselves servants, recognize this. The Jews had no state. What would be left to them if they had no Church, no synagogue?

The synagogue keeper, Elaser Merimon, whom we have before seen in company with the Cabbalist, had already been to Spinoza three times, and commanded him in the name of the Beth-Din \* to return to the congregation, and in meat and drink, as well as in attendance at the synagogue, to live after the

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\* Ecclesiastical Court.

precepts of the Jewish religion. He had refused to obey these commands, and the lesser excommunication was passed, which banished him for three months from the Jewish Church. Though he had already condemned himself to this penalty, he entered a protest against the sentence, because his manner of life was not radically in opposition to Judaism, and he pledged himself to prove the illegality of the ceremony. His protest, however, was in vain, and he thought no more about it, for he recognized only one ban—that which could banish him from the presence of Olympia. His two brothers-in-law then came, and reminded him that he must return to the bosom of the Church. He put them off with a quiet smile; but they became more and more violent, abused and cursed him, and threatened to tear him in pieces if he did not avert the shame of his manner of life from his relations.

Spinoza's Spanish blood boiled, but even then he suppressed all explosion of wrath. The threats and blustering seemed to him only immaterial opposition which he could have pictured to himself. With measured speech and kinsmanlike behavior, in so far as was consistent with independence, he drew the limits; he taught their violence that external behavior could not bind, and external force not convince. His words must have contained convincing proofs, for the two looked at each other in

mute astonishment and left him. A few days afterwards, however, on the Sabbath, Spinoza was surprised by another visitor, a woman, carrying a baby hardly a year old in her arms, and leading a little girl by the hand. Spinoza advanced kindly towards her.

“I am glad you have come to me, dear Miriam,” he said; “but how you have aged! Are you ill, or in trouble?”

“I am quite well, God be praised!” answered Miriam, sighing, “and could not complain otherwise. Yes, dear brother, ‘marrying is marring;’ two bad confinements, thirteen weeks in bed, and the household going to ruin all the time; no rest at night with the children, and trouble and care the whole year round—you would not laugh at me now for looking too often in the mirror; often I never look in it from one Sabbath to another.”

“I am very sorry that I have seen so little of you, or been able to help you so little; but leave the cares behind now,” said Spinoza, “they will soon be less. You can hardly think what an infinite pleasure it is to have you with me again. Relations are naturally the best friends. Do you remember old Chaje’s proverb? ‘Bind me hand and foot, and throw me among my people, that will always be true.’”

“Ay! you will be thrown nicely among your people. O God! from the way you go on, we

cannot see you without blushing. Do you know what is happening to-day? To-day you are summoned the second time in the synagogue; perhaps at this very moment in which we are speaking. A week ago I was in the synagogue; my heart is so heavy, it seems as if a hundredweight lay on it. When we had all risen,\* Rabbi Isaak Aboab (who gives himself great airs since he returned from Brazil) went to the altar; all were still, and looked to see what he would do next. He called on your name; and commanded you to return, if you would not have heaven's lightnings smite you, or the earth swallow you up. Dear brother, I thought my heart would be torn out. I turned icy cold, and then flames seemed to be before my eyes; I thought I should fall down, and grasped the railing; I fainted time after time; I don't know how I found strength to go home; Esther de Leon, who stood near me, went home with me. You know she is a malicious, mocking thing; but she ought to be silent, for she was once Acosta's betrothed, and you are not as bad as he yet, thank God!"

"No, and will never be."

"But it is bad enough now," began Miriam again; "to-day is the second time, and in a week you will be summoned for the third time, and then—I shall never survive the shame of it. My husband will

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\* For the Thora to be replaced.

order me to forget that you ever were my brother—and how can I do that? It seems you could, for if you can forget your religion, why should you not forget your sister.”

Miriam with these words looked at her brother's agitated face; she seemed sorry to have given him so much pain, and continued weeping:

“Day and night you are always in my mind; I forget my duties as mother and wife, and it is all your fault; it is the thought of your disregard of duty that makes me do it. I cannot think what makes you so obstinate, but I know this: if my son should one day cause such trouble to his sisters, I would rather he should die before he learned to speak.”

“You must not say so, dear sister; I hope all will come right yet. Does not your husband know you have come to me?”

“He must not know a word of it. Only think, he wanted me to go to the synagogue this morning, but, God forgive me! I would rather go to the gallows; the women would look at me, and whisper and giggle together. I said I should be obliged to stay with the children, and came to you; Rebecca stayed at home too, but she has not dared to come with me; her husband is too stern. I cannot see, though, why you will not return. You know, I do not care about trifles, and do not condemn you like the others; but the life you lead now, you could



lead just as well if you lived like other Jews. If you don't want to go three times to the synagogue, you can go once, and that cannot be much trouble to you. You see, you would still have to live, if, God forbid it! you were shut up in a House of Correction; would it not be much worse? No Sabbath, no holiday, what would you live for? I entreat you to come back; let other people trouble themselves about what belongs to religion, and what not. I believe you are right in many things, and I will listen to you in secret, if you must confide in some one; but what is the use of letting all the world know? I know well enough you men will not put up with things that we women must bear and endure; but you—you are quite different: from childhood you always gave up to others willingly. Be what you used to be again; believe me, you cannot be otherwise, it will break your heart to try any other rule. Control yourself now rather, and come back. O God! if you were with us again, we should be as happy and as much respected as we ever were. I will read your wishes in your eyes, I will lay my hands under your feet; with lifted hands I entreat you to come back to us."

Spinoza with difficulty mastered his agitation sufficiently to explain to his sister that he was fully determined to defend himself against the Rabbis, that they might not succeed in degrading either himself or his family; he would not merely break



their power in his own case, but in that of others also in which they would have put free thought under a ban.

“I believe it, I believe it!” cried Miriam enthusiastically; “you only want what is right; you are better than all the rest of the world. But believe me too, I have learned to know mankind since this misfortune has come through you. You wish to offer yourself as sacrifice for others? You are too good, you are the crown of mankind; the others are not worthy that a hair of your head should be injured for them.”

Spinoza was deeply moved as he looked at his sister, who loved him so well that for his love's sake she rejected all others. Miriam might have known the movement of his heart, for, with a wail of grief, she threw herself on his neck and cried,

“You cannot and you must not for the world's sake offer up yourself and us too. Or is it true that you wish to wed a Christian?”

Spinoza was in a painful dilemma. To lie was as foreign to his nature as night to day; and yet he hesitated how to explain to his sister that his intellect had led him over the boundaries of church dogmas, whither love was his only guide.

An unexpected circumstance freed him from the necessity of further explanation. The two children, seeing their mother crying on their uncle's neck, began to cry and scream also, so

that Miriam forgot her question in pacifying her children.

"Benjamin," she said to the boy, who was first pacified, "Benjamin, entreat your uncle not to leave us. Ah! the child has our late father's name, who would weep and wail too if he saw you; he cannot rest quietly in his grave if he hears what has become of you." Spinoza took the boy in his arms, and embraced and kissed him.

"As little as this child condemns me, as little would my father condemn me in eternity," he said. Little Sarah, too, played with her uncle's hand, and asked him, on her mother's bidding, to go with them. Spinoza repeated his assurance that he could defend himself; and Miriam with a heavy heart took her children away with her.

He had to sustain another conflict on account of his decision that day. Towards evening Rodrigo Casseres came to him.

"You have no father now," he said, "I must take his place. Do you remember the time you saw me first? You too will have a cur's burial like that renegade. Do you remember the evening when I told you of your uncle Geronimo's dreadful death? You too will die like that; only more God-forsaken, more torn by the devil, for you have trodden down the creed of your fathers of your own free-will. Your father, I and all of us, for what have we staked our lives day after day? For

the holy faith of our fathers. Why have we left our beautiful native land and wandered into far countries? That we might openly serve our faith in peace; and you reject it of your own free-will. I warn you while there is yet time; you are young now, but when you approach your end, your treachery will follow you when you wake, and murder your sleep."

Spinoza had regard to the man's age, and quietly represented to him his firm decision and his innocence.

For a week he was free from attempts at conversion, and during this time he worked out a plan of defence; and while employing for this purpose the authority of the Sacred Scriptures, he formed new conclusions and became more firm and decided in those he had long ago formed. What had been suppressed in the development of silent thought, whether by innate shyness or under cover of stated facts, now shot up with renewed strength in the hot conflict of defence. Spinoza, too, now felt that warlike spirit, that concentrated power, which strengthens ordinary forces and makes them rise above themselves.

For the next exhortation which was addressed to him he did not require this power.

On the Sabbath, as he sat at table enjoying his simple mid-day meal, he heard some one heavily mounting the stairs; the door opened, and old Chaje

entered the room. Spinoza drew a chair to the table for her, and asked:

“Have they sent you out too, to bring back the lost sheep to the flock?”

“No, as true as I wish God may let me see joy in him again, I came here of my own wish. I thought my old legs would break before I got up the stairs. I did not believe any of them. I wanted to hear with my own ears if it were true that he would reject our holy religion; he was once a brave, pious Jewish child.”

Spinoza remarked in silence the influence that the report spread about him must have had, for old Chaje in her zeal almost forgot his presence, and appeared to talk to herself about him.

“Who knows that?” asked Spinoza.

“Who knows it? A fine secret! The children in the street talk about it. O Lord, how often have I carried him in my arms! Who would have thought then that he could become such a one as this? What is true, is true; the sister of Black Gudul, who was servant at Rabbi Aboab’s, said long ago Baruch was a hypocrite; where he will be the Rabbi, the congregation will get baptized. I always thought, if I should close my eyes after living over a hundred years,—I have neither kith nor kin in the world, more’s the pity,—I would leave Baruch my little bit of fortune that I have saved up, and that he would have said prayers for my soul;

that I, too, might have a silver chair in Gan-Eden.\* Ah! my wishes and hopes have melted away."

Chaje wept bitterly. Spinoza tried to console her.

"He leads me too into sin by making me weep on the Sabbath; it has knocked another nail in my coffin," she wailed. "I would like to know what he can be thinking of. Has the Jewish religion been right for so many thousand years that it should be thrown aside now like a broken pot? He must be possessed, I do believe; why should he have abused the Jews and the Jewish religion? 'Cut off your nose and spite your face,' the proverb says. He will try and please me and be good and pious again, won't he? He will surely thank me on his deathbed, when he follows me. It was only youthful folly, and that is soon forgotten. The grass need only grow over it a year, and then he might choose among the daughters of the richest men in Amsterdam."

Spinoza was nearly powerless against old Chaje's talk; on her no explanation had any effect; she would not go away until he had promised to be pious and good again. At last he had to give her plainly to understand that she must take her departure. Olympia prophesied aright when she said pilgrimages would one day be made to Spinoza, but

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\* Paradise.



the pilgrimage was first made to Maledictus. The day after Spinoza had got rid of old Chaje, the physician Solomon de Silva came to him. He began with professional inquiries, and told Spinoza that his present way of life was undermining his health; but he replied that two of his friends were physicians, that he observed diet, and was always fairly well. Silva then drove his probe deeper.

"I confess," he said, "that Judaism contains many abuses and abnormal developments which ought to be got rid of; when I was your age it used to weigh on my mind too. The impetuosity of youth always wants hastily to cut away what displeases it, but that will not do; men must first win respect and confidence, and not shock people; then later on something may be permitted to you, and you can carry out your plans by degrees."

"The Talmud teaches that you should keep no false measures in your house," answered Spinoza. "Does that not refer here?"

"In any case," persisted the physician, "time and opportunity are to be considered; these everyday conditions have at least their natural rights as much as abstract logical thoughts. The first rule is, that whoever wishes to influence any association and work seasonable and reasonable reforms, must never place himself outside that association. Therefore I counsel you to return; remember there are other people who have seen



the light of reason, but who do not care to overthrow the old observances all at once. Much has happened latterly for the suggestion of which any one would have been stoned fifty years ago; and it is ever so with progress. You see, our whole Low-country home is a type of our religion. Dams are built, canals dug, to bind and restrain the wild power of the elements; on these dams life again appears, and the canals become connecting roads which hold men together. The power of centuries lies in these wise precautions. Common men even will keep this land sacred, because they know that the labor of races passed away has wrung it from the sea. If any one should come and find a better, must he pierce the dams, destroy the work of his forefathers, and for a short time annihilate fruitful fields, and populous villages and towns, now built on dry land? It is thus with our religion. Do not tear down the dams. Do not! If you return, there are many clear heads with whom, perhaps indeed at their head, you can help to reform Judaism."

"Who told you I wanted to do so? Perhaps Judaism is nothing more to me than its offshoot, Christianity—a development of mind followed by others. In the first place, I want nothing but to retain my independent life, and in that the power of no Rabbi shall hinder me."

"Have you forgotten," asked Silva, "what you

told me when we came to this room for the first time with your late father? The time may come when you will feel deserted by all who belong to you by bonds of kindred and religion; you will stretch out your hands to them, and grasp naught but empty air. I know too well how far your free thought has carried you; I do not believe you will turn Christian. Trust my experience, if you reach the highest point of free-thought, and have shaken off all prejudice or doctrinal peculiarity, you are, and will always remain, a Jew to them; they will always look upon you as a foreigner. They have imbibed hatred and aversion to the Jews with their mothers' milk; you waste your love on them. What good they may discover in you, they will set down as exceptional; if you strive for wealth and honor, they will say it is Jewish avarice and ambition; if you hold both cheap, they will say he has acquired a little Christian modesty and scorn of worldly wealth. They will think you charming and inimitable if you mock at Jewish folly; but if you attack one of their own prejudices, even if they themselves had long ago made a jest of it, you must not do it, and if you do it, you are a pert, obtrusive Jew. It is the same in this as in other things in life: we confess our faults, and blame ourselves for them; but if another does it, we are annoyed. Sooner will the heavens kiss the earth, or fire and water unite, than a Jew and a Christian

embrace in true, tender, all-forgetting love and union. Ay, and if you are baptized, the first defect they discover in you, it is the old Jewish Adam appearing. So return to your own people, who love you truly, and on whose neck rests the same yoke; they will receive you with brotherly love, and forget your backsliding."

"No," said Spinoza, "you have committed a sore sin against God and human nature by your words; it would be too horrible if they were true, but they are not. It is indeed possible for man to belong to man; love and comprehension are more durable than hatred and prejudice. Is the human mind originally Jewish or Christian? Well! I shall see in time whether you speak the truth."

"Do not; why should you be ruined? 'Whoever would purify himself, men will come to his help; but he who would defile himself, men let him alone,' says the Talmud. I will make you a good proposition. The congregation offer you a place in the Beth-Din; you can follow your studies undisturbed, for you have little to do there."

"I will never accept office."

"The congregation will guarantee you a salary of a thousand gulden, on condition that you will promise on your honor never to write a word against Judaism."

"The proverb says, 'If the people wish to silence a man, they must stop his mouth with

broth,' replied Spinoza. "It is a practical and politic method, but not applicable to my case. My dear doctor, I do not want you to be angry with me, but what are such proposals to me?"

"I only told you of them to fulfil my commission; I personally have something else to say to you. Youth will not see that there is really no such thing as absolute truth, that such a thing cannot exist in the world, because it would be tyrannically absolute. He who knows the fate of man, and has lived a long life of his own, knows that historical truth alone is worth anything. You are too modest and humble to be a scoffer; you see, even God allows the many-sidedness of truth; grant—"

"And my intelligence of Him obliges me to follow that perception."

"Hold firmly to that, and at the same time hold to the conditions of history. Whether you come to my conviction that no philosophy can reveal the secrets of the world further than the Jewish revelation, or whether you are of another opinion, and accept the Messianic time as one in which your absolute intellectual truth reigns; look back: if it were for nothing but the memory of the innumerable multitude who were murdered for our faith, this alone must keep us fast within its sacred walls. A religion which despises the joys of life, and teaches love of a fearful death for its sake, must it not contain the first spring of truth? Who would

dam it up with a rash hand because in course of time it runs muddily? The blood of your brothers and sisters murdered in the past cries to Heaven for vengeance on you, for you defile their honorable graves by writing on their tombstones that they died for illusion and error."

"I do not do so; it is calumny to say so of me: the Jewish laws are great and holy to me; in them the Godhead for those times most clearly revealed himself; blessed are they who know and live according to them; but has the Divinity since those times ceased to live in the minds of men? Are all later born races doomed to stop where the former stood, and fetter themselves with old forms? The form fades, the spirit remains eternal, renewed in youth, and increasing ever in strength."

"A powerful mind is in you," began Silva again, controlling himself; "your moderation assures me that you will be a great man. Weak natures are violent and wrathful in controversy, but never the strong. Do not throw a stone in the well you have drunk from. Your resolution to freely sacrifice all for the truth, you have inherited from the Jews. Be thankful. Show your power by self-control, be faithful to yourself and your own, and be not led away to apostasy."

"There is no apostasy but from ourselves."

"We shall all honor you, I above the rest, if you control yourself."



“And I shall be disgraced in my own eyes.”

Confusion and dejection were seen in Silva's face; everything, even just appreciation of his virtue, was in vain with Spinoza. The physician rose and cried:

“Alas! you are lost. I can only pray to God to let in the light of day on you, that the *ignis fatuus* which leads you into marsh and slough may vanish.”

Tears stood in Silva's eyes as he spoke; he turned and went away. Spinoza was deeply moved by the conversation; he was much pained to have so grieved the reverend old man, and not to be able to obey him; but how otherwise could he or durst he act?

It was much easier for Spinoza to dismiss the last tempter. In the afternoon Chisdai came, and as soon as he had entered the door he threw himself on the floor and sat as if mourning.

“What is that for?” said Spinoza.

“Alas!” cried Chisdai, muttering to the floor, without raising his head, “has the unclean spirit in thee made thee forget everything? Do you no longer know the story of Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrkanos?”

“Very well; he wanted to prove his view of the permissible use of a baker's oven by miracles, and was excommunicated for it. No one would take him the news till Rabbi Akiba did as you are doing



here. Am I not still a good Talmudist? But get up; I can neither tell a tree to place itself elsewhere, nor water that it should flow backwards, nor the walls either that they should bend inward; they none of them obey me."

"So!" cried Chisdai, springing up, and shaking his fist fiercely, "so you mock at the Talmud too? You see I came here in peace; I would have warned you to fear God, and showed you that I did not oppose you in jealousy or any other base passion; but words are lost on you. Go thy ways! The carrion crows beside the stream will peck out thine eyes, and the young eagles devour them."

"You can pervert the Bible, like a good Talmudist as you are; the Scriptures only lay that curse on one who mocks at and scorns his father and mother."

"That you have done seventy times seven, you reprobate. But your punishment will not tarry; you will yet be stoned to death, and men will cast stones in heaps on thy carcass, for a warning to all coming generations. Take heed to thyself; if I get thee into my hands I will tear thee as men tear fish, until thy breath can no longer poison the air."

"Talmud again," laughed Spinoza; "but remember the Talmud also says, 'It is good that the ass hath no horns.'"

Chisdai foamed at the mouth with rage, but hearing some one on the stairs he went out.

“What sort of a featherless biped is it that has just left you?” said Meyer, entering; “he looks like an incarnate original sin.”

Spinoza laughed heartily at the description.

“You have ridden your hobby horse to the right post this time,” said he; “but this original sin wanted to lead me back into the Jewish paradise.”

Meyer exhorted him to oppose the Jewish Papacy with all his usual power and firmness, and as he soon took his leave, Spinoza too went out.

For the first time he felt not at home alone within his own four walls; he found it impossible to concentrate his mind as formerly on the investigation of any particular line of thought; he needed a friendly cheerful heart with whom he could unbend, and forget the storm of the day. Where should he seek it if not with Olympia? He went there, and found her in confidential conversation with Kerkering. He thought both looked strangely surprised when he entered; he guessed rightly that he had been the subject of their conversation.

Olympia, as usual, easily mastered her agitation.

“You appeared to me in a dream last night, Herr von Spinoza,” she said in the course of conversation; “you must guess in what form.”

“You believe in neither angels nor devils; perhaps you saw me in the form of a monk?”

“No, guess again.”

“An Emperor?”

“No.”

“A Rabbi? A Pope?”

“No, you are not guessing now, I know. I saw you as Masaniello, with a fishing net on your back; your red embroidered cap with the long tassel suited your coal-black hair, and your sleeves were rolled up above your elbows. I saw you carried through the streets that way, by a crowd of Jews, to the new Town Hall; there you climbed up to the golden ship on the tower and cried: ‘Fellow-citizens, you who, as Erasmus of Rotterdam says, live like crows on the tops of trees! I see your fork-like chimneys and your double-faced gables, I see the canals and dams that intersect your land, and your life that flows on as much contracted, and without free tide, in the preordained way. I tell you, this will all be changed. I erase the “You should” from your book of life, and in my doctrine write it, “You must, for you can.” You think fish are mute? It is not true. I have caught a legion from the depth of the sea, who all speak wisdom.’ Then you took your net from your back, it was empty; you turned it round, and an infinite number of fish fell out; they glittered beautifully in the sun, their fins became wings, and they fluttered away screaming. You, however, remained there, and uttered a Philippic against the legend that, on the day on which the envoys of the seven United Provinces should go through the seven doors of the

finished Town Hall the good-fortune of each province would desert it and never return. And then you explained how your philosophy corresponded with the water communication of our land; how they could break and control storms and tides; how men could drain flooded land from the stream of sensations, and make it dry and fertile; everything was perfectly clear, I understood it quite well in my dream. Now I am, unfortunately, as unphilosophical again as the *grauw*—the crowd—who roared and shrieked, 'He is a wizard, he is a son of the Devil!' and pulled down the Town Hall. I awoke. If you only possessed some of Daniel's art!"

Spinoza asked if she had spoken to Frau Gertrui lately; Olympia protested she had not seen her for several weeks. It was really a strange coincidence, for Spinoza had two days ago begun the odd freak of drawing his own portrait as Masaniello. He told Olympia nothing of this, because he knew that she was much given, in spite of her free-thinking opinions, to building up wonderful theories of premonition. To-day, too, he did not feel at ease with her. Was it the presence of Kerkering, or was it because he had come there with a full heart, and saw too late that he should find no sympathy here in his painful conflict? An undefined uncertainty and doubt pervaded his connection with Olympia. He saw that Kerkering became more and more familiar with her, and she did not, as formerly,

keep him jestingly at a distance. He even thought he perceived a secret understanding between them. When he left, Olympia said:

“Your sister Rebecca came to me to-day. I was to persuade you to submit to the Rabbis.”

Spinoza bowed in silence. How could she relate her dream and carry on such jests, instead of imparting this circumstance? Must it not have made her heart full that his sister should come entreatingly to her? “You should not expect others to know an emotion which you suppress in yourself,” he said to himself.

Miriam, who had lived with him in sisterly love from childhood, came to him, and only inquired shyly about his love; while Rebecca, the domineering, who had always been estranged from him, went straight to Olympia. What must she have appeared to her? Perhaps she had made his beloved one’s heart doubtful, and given her a dislike to his family.

Spinoza felt his cheeks burn. He was on the point of cutting loose from all bonds of family and all chains of habit, but could never endure these to be despised.

Love and truth should have stood by him in the conflict now opening on him. Did truth alone remain to him?



## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE EXCOMMUNICATION.

AN innumerable crowd lined the streets, praying with folded hands to the Lord that he would protect the undertaking of their liberator. In front rode the Imperial herald with the eagle, and the soldier of God's Word followed, accompanied by travellers the same way in shining steel and gorgeous accoutrements. And when he entered the assembly, his admirers climbed on the roofs, and filled the streets and windows, for each one esteemed himself highly favored who caught sight of him. And when he had boldly and manfully fought the battle, he was borne home in triumph, and a voice was heard to cry, "Blessed are the hands that bear him." Thus, in the year 1521, Martin Luther went to Worms, the bold champion of the freedom of the Divine Word.

It is hard to sustain a conflict with power and custom at any time; it is painful to support it publicly; but the thousand upturned sympathetic faces are like a glory round the head of the champion, and raise his strength to be the strength of thousands. And if he finds himself overcome, he has felt the blessings of innumerable hearts in whom



his ideas will live. How very different it is to gird for a conflict without victory in mute obscurity!

In the year 1657 Benedict Spinoza went alone to the House of Jacob Synagogue in Amsterdam, accompanied by no one, greeted by no one. The people who knew him avoided this man, who was the firmest champion of the freedom of religious thought. He had no old written law to conquer for the world anew; he appeared as if he would deprive it of its strongest fortress, since he would have naught but the good old right of free thought.

In the synagogue the ten Judges sat in their seats, the president being Rabbi Isaak Aboab. Near him sat Rabbi Saul Morteira. Spinoza stood four paces distant from him. Rabbi Isaak Aboab rose and said:

“With the help of God we are here assembled to declare judgment and law on thee, Baruch ben Benjamin Spinoza. Swear to us in the name of the Almighty God that thou wilt neither deny nor conceal anything from us, and that thou wilt submit to the sentence which the Lord shall make known by our mouths.”

“Deceit I know not, and lies are far from me,” answered Spinoza; “I will submit to your judgment, if you judge me according to the Divine Word, and not according to the inclinations of your own hearts and the interpretations of the Rabbis.”

A murmur rose in the assembly, but it could be

heard that the almost universal opinion was that the accused, by thus demurring to recognize their authority unconditionally, ought to be laid under the greater excommunication without further trial. Rabbi Saul Morteira called for silence.

“Let us see,” he said, “how far the corruption of his heart goes. Say, renegade, hast thou not sinned against God in the enjoyment of forbidden meat and drink, and by laboring on the Sabbath? Hast thou not deserted the assembly of the faithful, and defamed the sacred name of God and His laws? And it is written, ‘He who profaneth the name of God in secret shall be punished openly.’”

A pause ensued. Spinoza looked down, then looking up he replied in a calm voice:

“I cannot do miracles and signs, or call upon nature to stand by and witness for me. In me alone must be shown the power which proves the presence of God in every human heart. That I stand here before you, accused by you who believe another manner of life well pleasing to God, that I do not tremble and accuse myself of aught, accept as a sign of my love to God, which I consider my highest good. I defend myself only on the accusation of Sabbath-breaking, because this may appear an offence against the sacred law of God in nature. It is well and advantageous to oppressed men that they should have one day in seven for rest. And it is wise, for the privilege of humanity consists in

free regulation of its powers; but who gives you the right to punish a man for a sin which he commits against himself?"

Those assembled all rose from their seats and cried out that they would no longer listen to such blasphemy; but Rabbi Isaak Aboab said:

"Let him speak. From every word he speaks a demon rises that will cling round his soul in his extremity; and when he dies the death of a sinner, they will hang on to him, and drag him down to the pit of hell. It is our duty to hear his whole guilt. Step forward and speak, witnesses."

Chisdai and Ephraim advanced; the one proudly looking up, the other looking down ashamed.

"He has blasphemed God and the prophets in our hearing, denied the angels, and mocked at the miracles; and that he has done all this I swear before the face of the eternal God."

"I swear, too, that Chisdai has spoken the truth," said Ephraim in a low voice.

"What answer do you make?" asked Morteira; and Spinoza replied:

"I have not blasphemed the prophets. Indeed I honor them better than those who wreath their heads with the false glory of infallibility; who rob them of the divine majesty of human greatness, and degrade them to idols. Go forth and see, did the sun stand still in Gibeon? I have denied the angels? Has not Rabbi Joseph Albo already said

openly, that belief in the existence of angels was immaterial and unnecessary? I have mocked at the miracles? What do you accuse me of? Open at the passage where Balaam's ass speaks, and look what Ebn Esra says there. I have blasphemed God? I pity thee that thou knowest not that no human intellect which follows its innate laws can escape him."

"Have you not said," interrupted Chisdai—"woe is me that I must speak it after you!—have you not said that in the Holy Scriptures many imperfect and false ideas of the nature of God are to be found?"

"I think I honor God more than you by that. Is not God called 'great' in the Bible, and is there a 'greatness' without limited extension in space? It is true the Bible can only be explained by itself. It carries the ground of its truths in itself. It will not be measured by the laws of intellect; but neither will it overrule them. The reason God has given us, therefore, is no less divine, and can and must create its ideal of God for itself, and find in itself what is necessary to the leading of a godly life. The Bible itself recognizes this sacred right of our Reason, in recognizing a godly war of life in the men who lived before the revelation on Sinai, while it detracts from the truth in the law-giving of Moses as a merely temporal revelation, by saying: 'It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who

shall go for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.' In our reason, on the height of pure religious thought, there is our Sinai. I will faithfully and openly explain to you my views of higher things; if you refute me by reason, I will submit to you."

"You have appealed to the Holy Scriptures," cried Morteira. "Woe! that thy tongue was not burned to ashes, that thou venturedst to take its holy words thereon; what would you have with your Baal, Reason?"

"Destroy him if you can," replied Spinoza.

Rabbi Isaak Aboab had till now quietly listened to the discussion; now he rose and cried:

"The measure is full; you are all agreed with me that this epicurean has deserved the extremest chastisement of Gehinom."

All present answered with an audible "Amen," and Aboab continued:

"Now I ask of thee, Baruch ben Benjamin Spinoza, wilt thou recant thy blasphemous words, and submit thee to the penance that is due on that account, or wilt thou that the highest curse of excommunication be passed on thee?"

"Refute me by Reason and I will recant! You will not hear me. I would answer you from the Scriptures. If you cannot hear me in this obscure



synagogue, and will not try the Truth on its just grounds, I will speak my thoughts to the whole world, where no ban reaches. I have only come to your tribunal to show you that I oppose no association that thinks it possesses the truth in its creed; but freedom of thought has its own inviolable domains. If you, as you have here accepted me, now reject me—a new day will break—”

“False prophet, be silent!” thundered Rabbi Aboab. “I ask for the second time, I ask for the third time, will you recant?”

The stillness of the grave reigned for a second in the hall; then Spinoza looked up, and answered in a firm voice:

“I cannot, but neither can you do otherwise; I curse you not.”

Rabbi Isaak Aboab tore his mantle, and Rabbi Saul Morteira took the Schofar that lay covered before him, and blew it three times, so that it echoed on all sides of the dome; the sacred ark was opened, all present arose, and Rabbi Isaak Aboab read from a parchment:

“In the Name of the Lord of lords  
Art thou, Baruch, son of Benjamin,  
Laid under the greater ban.  
Be thou under the ban of both laws,  
Heavenly and earthly:  
Be banned by the saints above,  
Be banned by the Seraphim,  
Be banned by the Ophanim.



Shut out from all communities,  
 From the great and from the small.  
 On thee be great and heavy plagues,  
 Painful and horrible sickness:  
 Thy house be a dragon's den,  
 And thy star vanish from above.  
 Be thou the pest and horror of men,  
 And thy carcass the food of snakes.  
 Be thou a sport unto thine enemies,  
 And the goods that thou mayest possess  
 Be the portion of strangers.  
 Before the doors of thine enemies  
 May thy children wail,  
 And because of thy life's tortures  
 Be thy children's children struck with horror.  
 Be accursed by all spirits

. . . . .  
 Michael and Gabriel,  
 Raphael and Mescharthel.  
 Be accursed of the Great God.  
 By the seventy Spirits' names,  
 Subjects to the Great King,  
 By the great seal Zartok,  
 Go to Hell like Korah's band,  
 And with trembling and quivering  
 Thy soul go out of thee.  
 God's terrors slay thee,  
 Overthrown like Achitophel  
 In the snares of thy plots.  
 Gehazi's leprosy be thine,  
 And from thy fall mayst thou never arise;  
 Where Israel's graves lie  
 Be thy grave never dug.  
 Given away to the stranger

Be thy wife ; in thine hour of death  
May others defile her.—  
This ban, and this curse  
On Baruch, son of Benjamin.  
But on all Israel  
And on me rest the peace of God  
And his blessing eternally.”

On this the Rabbi took the Thora from the sacred ark, unrolled it and read (Deut. xxix. 19, etc.): “And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: the Lord will not spare him. But then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven.” The Thora was returned to the sacred ark, the Schofar was again blown, and all those present said, turning towards Spinoza,

“Cursed be thy coming in, and cursed be thy going out.”

All spat towards him, and recoiled four paces, as with unbroken firmness he left the synagogue.

Would this exit from the accustomed sanctuary be entrance to another, or would he never more enter a temple of stone, and outwardly prove that a free man is the temple of God?

Before the synagogue he met Oldenburg, Meyer, and de Vries, who waited for him; they had heard of the proceedings, and waited here to protect him from the violence of the Rabbis. The friends had never yet seen Spinoza's countenance so animated as now. They went silently away with him; Oldenburg grasped his hand and pressed it.

As Spinoza passed his father's house he heard the lamentations of his sisters; he knew they now bewailed him more bitterly than if he were dead.

Now that he had not renounced it of his own free will, now that it was torn from him, he felt doubly what it is to be cut off in youth from all that is dear and familiar in it; cutting all threads of memory, and so dismembering life, that it has no longer a connection with the past.

The saddest consciousness in the casting off of any tender relation of life lies in this, that on both sides a piece of life is extinguished and destroyed, whose involuntary reawakening often fills us with supernatural horror, and makes us hasten our flight to oblivion.

"So they sat down with him . . . and none spake a word unto him, for they saw that his grief was very great."

So it says in Job. Here, too, the three friends sat and said nothing, for they saw that his grief was very great. Oldenburg quietly laid his hand on Spinoza's shoulder, as if he could support him

thus and lend him some of his own strength. He felt what must agitate the heart of his friend, for, though long absent from the congregation of the synagogue, he must feel this rough rupture like a fatal fall come at last. Even if expected and known of for long beforehand, when death is at last brought decisively face to face the pain is quite new—quite different.

No sound was heard. Once only Oldenburg softly and with warning movement spoke a few words to Meyer when the latter had whispered something in his ear, for Meyer was inclined to treat the whole affair as hardly worth speaking of, or to make a jest of it.

Spinoza sat sunk in his own thoughts, his brow and eyes covered with his hands. The friends looked at him in silence, waiting the first word that he would say. At last he looked up, and as if answering an appeal he said:

“No, no! they shall not oblige me to oppose them in bitterness, hatred and injustice. This curse, too, is love. They would leave none to go wrong; they would frighten and chastise him who would renounce their association. And this horrible, elaborate curse! If praise has its allotted forms cursing must have them also. They cannot convert my thoughts. If I act in opposition to them it is I no longer who live and act. No, I will live out my own life; the world shall not be my master!”

“The world?” Meyer could contain himself no longer. “What have a set of rabbis in an obscure synagogue to do with the world? They send you into exile; into a world that is much more beautiful and greater than the one from which they banish you.”

“You may be right; but remember I received there my deepest awakenings of pleasure and pain. There was a time when honor and dishonor there were to me the honor and dishonor of the whole world. That is past.”

“Now, my friend!” cried Oldenburg, “you will go out into the real world, into the wide, great world, and you will go with me. I must leave Amsterdam in a few days.”

“You, and just now?”

“I am sent by my native town on an embassy to London. Come with me.”

“What should I do there with you?”

“A great scientific society is to be founded in London. I am appointed a member, and you shall work with me.”

In bright, attractive colors Oldenburg drew a picture of the great world. Honor, renown, pleasure and enjoyment sparkled in unknown splendor, and Spinoza's countenance became suddenly brighter and happier. He saw himself in the midst of the great striving crowd, and amidst it all played a scene of domestic happiness in which Olympia ruled.

Meyer and de Vries added their persuasions. Their words were hardly necessary, for what he now heard outwardly Spinoza said to himself inwardly. He tremblingly seized Oldenburg's hand, but arrested himself hastily and said:

"Excuse me; I must now be alone for a time."

He was left alone and the conflict raged within him.

"But why did the friends say nothing of Olympia? Was I mistaken in thinking I perceived a certain shyness, a certain strangeness in them? To her—to her; under her eyes the new life must begin."



## CHAPTER XXV.

### WOOING BY PROXY.

AT the time when Spinoza was leaving the synagogue the sacristan was unbolting a side-door of the Catholic Church of St. John. Two festively clad men came out, the one with a pale, agitated face, the other laughing and gay. It was Van den Ende and Kerkering.

“I am shivering,” said the latter. “I feel as if my usual clothing was torn off and I was freezing. When I was on my knees there abjuring the familiar, if half forgotten faith, and accepting yours, my heart contracted as if icy cold, and I could hardly bring out the required words. It is a good thing that in the final carrying out of a resolution we have no alternative left.”

“This nonsensical sensation,” replied Van den Ende, “is nothing but the cold church and your unaccustomed position, which checks your circulation. Come, my son; the wine which they refuse you there and keep for themselves is much better at other taverns. Look at the whole thing, as you have so well described it, in the light of a change of clothes; as the fashion is, you have equipped yourself for a wedding, nothing more.”

Nevertheless Kerkering threw troubled glances round; he thought every one must be looking at him to see what had happened. It was not till they turned round the church of St. Olave's to Van den Ende's house that the color returned to his cheeks. In the physician's study, where he drank to the new convert in "the mother's milk of *alma mater* nature," as he called it, Kerkering was warmed by the fiery wine, and joined in the jest on the childish sensations which he had experienced.

Van den Ende sent to desire an interview with Olympia, but she sent word that she was ill in bed. He hastened to her, leaving Kerkering alone.

"My child," said the father to his daughter, "I am going on a difficult, perhaps dangerous journey. It is a comfort to me that I leave you in good care."

"May I not know where and why? Why have I lost your confidence?" inquired Olympia.

"That you may not pine or be anxious unnecessarily. When it is over you will be the first to rejoice. I must play my part on a large stage. I do not know whether it will be to laugh or weep. In any case it is worth the trouble to prepare with hat and wig. You should remember that Lucian and Democritus fit themselves with courage, as well as their more dismal gods. But you shall know everything later. Now let me talk to you as a father, as a friend. Look, I come to you in gala-

dress. Say now with the Stoic to physical ill, 'I am stronger than thou.' Deck thyself likewise. Take this."

Olympia listened in astonishment to her father's voice, doubly gay in her silence, and looked wonderingly at the offered pearls.

"What is that for?" she asked.

"This bridal gift of his mother's our friend sends you as a compliment, and says he has shed more tears for you than there are pearls in the depths of the sea."

"Did he weep? I never thought he would have done that. It was surely because he had to abjure his father's faith and accept ours."

"He did do it, my child. There was still enough stiff-necked Protestantism in him to protest against it, but it is a proof of his love. In Kerkering you restore my Cornelius to me."

"Alas!" cried Olympia, and covered her face in the pillows. After much persuasion from her father she looked up sobbing. "We are all unhappy. My love belongs—you know, father; why need I say it? I love Spinoza, and am beloved by him with all the divine greatness of his mind, as never maiden was loved before."

Van den Ende struck his forehead with his clenched fist. He paced the room thoughtfully for a long time, then again seated himself beside his daughter's bed.

"Dear Olympia," he said, "be open with me. Have you already confessed your love?"

"Yes."

"And do you expect my consent?"

"Certainly, for your free-thinking mind can admit of no prejudices."

"I will not. Let us look at the thing openly. What do you mean to live on? You know what I have is not really my own."

"Spinoza could have a chair of mathematics or philosophy at any university."

"That is not certain; he is rejected by the Jews as an infidel, and the priests of all confessions join hands when it is worth while to put down the common enemy. He can polish glass, and you earn something with organ playing or other instruction. It might be sufficient to ward off death by starvation, and if you have even pure water for broth you can steep your philosophy in it, and it will be nutritious food, but your children unfortunately will not be satisfied therewith. Your love is nothing but a false syllogism."

"Father, you are too hard."

"I am not. On your spiritual heights, where you let yourself be fluttered round by nothing but genii who have neither bone nor marrow, any one such as I am must appear a barbarian. You have solved the eternal problem of human fate and the existence of the world; what does it matter to you if

your fate and the nourishment of your existence give you a new problem to solve day by day? Your souls love each other, and the dear souls, ah! they are such dear adaptable creatures that no privation is too hard for them."

"Is that the want of prejudice with which you would talk to me? Do the sacrifices which I so joyfully undertake merit such mockery?"

"You are right," replied the father, "you may marry him; I will not oppose it. The human will is his kingdom; it is also my motto. But think of one thing: how will you bear it when your friends and acquaintances turn up their noses and titter when they see you cross the street with him? 'Look, there she goes,' they will say; 'she would have stayed a spinster if the poor Jew, whose kin even rejected him, had not taken pity on her!' I cannot say they are wrong if they think, 'If he really loved her he would have denied his old creed willingly, and not have waited till he was turned out;' for that is and always will be an insult in the eyes of the world. And they will gossip further and say: 'How proud she was once, and how she looked down on us; she is lucky now, she does not want a wardrobe; the cast-off dress she had ten years ago is now her whole stock. We pity her with all our hearts.' I know such things could not and would not shake your resolution; I only tell it you that you may know it beforehand. I will not compare



Spinoza in any way with Kerkering ; his mind is great, and one minute in which your souls ring in celestial harmony together weighs against years of self-denial, weighs against all enjoyment of earthly pleasures. You love and honor him, you admire the majestic nature of his intellect. I do not believe that he will misuse this power over you ; such things seldom happen. What is he compared to Kerkering ? He has sealed his love by going over to your church ; he has left a powerful and honorable association ; he has not made you a partaker in the painful preliminaries, nor laid any responsibility on you that you might receive the fruit of his work without personal trouble, and it is thus that he will always act. You will be bound by no gratitude for his acts ; he makes no pretension but that he loves you. He adores you, all your words are oracles to him, the lightest wish of your heart is a command to him which he fulfils with joy ; but you are right, you would not have a husband whom you could rule ; the wife's fairest ornament is obedience, obedience even to tyrannical oppression. What can Kerkering offer you ? Nothing but a good, faithful heart that beats only for you. He can give you a life amid brilliant society, honor and pleasure. You will be an object of envy to all your friends. But what is all this to the enjoyment of perfect intellectual harmony ? Truly, it is eternal, and your eternity will outlast a year, maybe two ; is not that enough ?”



Van den Ende was silent. Olympia no longer wept and sobbed; she dreamily played with the pearls that lay before her.

“Can I get up?” she inquired at last.

“Certainly,” said the father, and smiled contentedly to himself as he left the room.

Olympia rose and dressed.

“I made out my love to be stronger than it is, to my father,” she said to herself. “Was it not in the beginning mere wounded self-love and desire to see no man unconquered that threw me into his arms? No, I loved him formerly, and I love him yet.” She took the pearls, clasped them round her neck, and looked at herself well pleased in the mirror. “‘I should not have found another husband,’ they will say; what does that matter to me? My own consciousness tells me these pearls, and with them a life of brilliant enjoyment, was in my hand, and I despised it all. But am I right to do it? He is a born hermit, knowledge is his goddess. I only free him, I give him back himself, if I deny him my hand. No, this glitter dazzles my eyes. And yet, may not his strong mind behave differently when, safe in possession of me, he has no longer to woo for my favor? He knows I feel small beside him. How often has he tutored me, and will he not do it in another sense then? No, he is kind and good, but I am too weak, and Kerkering’s submissive adoration has fascinated me.”

She laid the pearls down, and paced the chamber thoughtfully. Again she stood before the mirror and gazed into it dreamily and absently. She saw herself, pining, ragged, muddy and laughed at, go through the streets; she only banished this maddening vision with a forced song. When her father heard her so gay he entered the room.

“Kerkering,” said he, “is waiting outside; he will not move from the spot until he receives the decisive ‘Yes’ or ‘No.’ I believe I know your thoughts. I will not try to influence your decision, but I may be able to help you. Come with me.”

Olympia clung to her father as if in childlike obedience and humility, and intimated that she complied with his wishes; in this compliance lay a half-unconscious obstinacy, thinly covered by an appearance of humility. Her father took her hand, and led her into the other room to Kerkering, saying:

“Here I bring your bride, my son.”

Kerkering took a diamond ring from his finger, and placed it on Olympia’s.

“Mine forever!” he said, and impressed a warm kiss on her lips. In the same hour that Spinoza struggled with the temptations of a life of honor and pleasure Olympia also had fought with temptation and succumbed.

Kerkering and his bride sat that evening in confidential discourse. Van den Ende rubbed his

hands and smiled as he paced the room. Olympia felt more and more at ease in Kerkering's company; indeed she found him so amiable that she blamed herself for not having given him her heart long before. Kerkering told her that he had bought a well-broken-in riding horse for her, and that again, as years before, she should sit proudly in her saddle, and ride through the streets with him. He spread a brilliant life of pleasure in entrancing colors before her eyes. Olympia's cheeks flushed rosy red, her heart beat loudly. Kerkering held her in his embrace. At an unusual hour and with unusual gravity Spinoza entered. Olympia tore herself from Kerkering's arms; for a second she pressed her hands to her eyes, then stood up and advanced to Spinoza.

"I know you do not like scenes any more than I," she said with a trembling voice. "I have no concealments from my father and Kerkering; we did love each other. Remember that sacred hour when you conjured me to forget what we were and wished to be. Now that time is come. Herr Kerkering is my betrothed."

She was obliged to support herself by her organ. Spinoza stood as if spellbound before her, gazing at her.

"I entreat you," began Olympia again, "do not withdraw your friendship from me."

"I hope Herr Kerkering may afford you the

happiness that I myself in happier hours hoped to be able to offer you," answered Spinoza in a hoarse voice. He stayed for some time, spoke on indifferent subjects, and with an amount of humor which they had not perceived in him before. Though deception was so foreign to his nature, he was here entangled in a double network of it. He hoped by his equanimity to make Olympia's part easier to her, and made it more difficult; he thought it owing to his self-respect to remain longer that he might take leave quietly; but truly it was because it was so painful to him to tear himself away forever from the charming surroundings in which the best joys of love had bloomed for him.

Oldenburg came too, and for the first time kissed Spinoza when he heard what had taken place.

Kerkering was in overflowing spirits, and jestingly said that he was only born that day, and Olympia must sing him a cradle-song. Oldenburg asked for the song of the "Maid under the lime trees." Olympia objected, but Kerkering too insisted on that particular one; he desired it as the first and only compliance of his new life, and pressed on all sides, Olympia unwillingly sat down to the organ, and sang:

"A maiden should right early rise  
 To seek where her beloved one lies.  
 Beneath the lime trees she sought him,  
 But found not her love where she thought him.

“ A knight came riding that way to see.  
 ‘ What do you here alone ? ’ said he.  
 ‘ Count you the greenest branches,  
 Or the golden, yellow roses ? ’

“ ‘ I count the greenest branches not,  
 And I pluck the golden roses not.  
 By my lover I am forsaken,  
 No tidings my ears awaken. ’

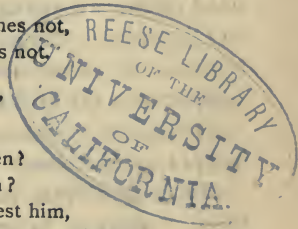
“ ‘ Art thou by a lover forsaken ?  
 No tidings your ears awaken ?  
 In Zealand’s vales he doth rest him,  
 Where other fair dames have caressed him. ’

“ ‘ In Zealand’s fields he doth rest him,  
 Where other fair dames have caressed him.  
 I pray that Heaven his guard may be  
 Among those ladies fair and free. ’

“ What took he then from his arms so bold ?  
 A chain it was of red, red gold.  
 ‘ Fair child, this chain will I give you,  
 Forget you the love who did leave you. ’

“ ‘ And were the chain but once so long  
 That it hung from Heaven to earth along,  
 Much rather I would it should fail me,  
 Than love for another avail me. ’

“ But the blood of the knight was fiery too.  
 ‘ Fair child, ’ he cried, ‘ take heed what you do.  
 You are my true and rightful wife.  
 No other shall be my own for life. ’ ”





The last notes had not died away when Spinoza took his hat and departed. Olympia rose and closed the keyboard of the organ so that the pipes rattled together. With overflowing heart, thus in need of the sympathy of others, Spinoza had come to Olympia. There are times when those to whom temples of stone are closed must worship in the temple of a faithful human heart.

The fate of Spinoza had thus directed him to seek happiness in himself alone.

He might well have consoled himself in that there was now no necessity for him to bow the mind trained to truth alone to any form accepted by others, and be taught by daily labor and daily care to silence and conceal his convictions. He might well have comforted himself in that a love was annihilated with which he had so often struggled painfully; but it is ever an enigma of love that it longs for lost pain, lost desire. Bitterness and depression sought to seize on him, but in self-controlled wisdom he learned to impart to his mind ever more steadfastly that peace of mind which is freedom of mind, in that it submits to the necessity of events, and follows their laws as if the heart itself had no concern in them. That abandonment to a grief whose painful effects can be conquered by reason is partial suicide. He who would be free, that is, would live according to the laws of reason, must never cease to be; and he permits this, his



living eternal self-existence, to be interrupted, if he allows himself to be overwhelmed by his sensations. Only a life according to reason is the true, eternal life.

It was a hard conflict, a breaking loose from all special pleasures and all flattering demands, which should at last lead him to the summit of pure intellect, and enable him to express this sentence, almost incomprehensible to us, which apparently despises the world, and yet glorifies it:

“I would investigate the acts and efforts of men as though they were lines, planes or bodies.”

His friends observed Spinoza's victorious self-control with surprise and admiration. By free thought he had conquered life with all its casualties, and now in quiet peace of mind he might first call it really his own.

No glory surrounded his head, but it illuminated his whole being.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### SCARS AND PURIFICATION.

THE Jewish Church wished to follow up its excommunication with civic consequences, and petitioned the magistrates to banish the "Blasphemer" from the city. The affair was laid before the synod of the reformed ministry for decision, and the quiet thinker often found himself distracted from his investigations by citations and writs. With profound reflections on the regulation of the commonwealth, and the consumption of human material required by it, he often wandered through the long passages of the law courts, or sat waiting in the ante-rooms. The martyrdom of the modern world is composed of a long array of thousands of trifling annoyances, and our philosopher had yet more to experience.

His friends pressed him to leave his native land of his own free will; he, however, maintained that for justice' sake he must submit himself to the judgment of the laws appealed to. It was Oldenburg's last act of friendship, when sent to England as the envoy of the Lower Saxon Union, to free his friend from these annoyances. He repeatedly entreated Spinoza to follow him, but Spinoza wished

to remain in his quiet seclusion in his native land. But he now prepared to leave Amsterdam, for, though he was free from all anger, he could not always suppress the sudden emotion which often agitated him so painfully at seeing himself surrounded by dislike and avoidance in his native place. It was more painful to him innocently to raise this feeling in others than to bear its consequences himself.

The peculiarities of the friends showed themselves in these discussions in a characteristic manner. Meyer found extreme pleasure in lashing the transgressions, the narrowness, the stupidity of men with his sharp satire. Oldenburg declined this means, because any violent opposition, all hand to hand conflict with the common herd, appeared to him unlovely and unclean; and thus Spinoza and Oldenburg often agreed. What the other totally avoided from a certain feeling for harmony Spinoza reasoned out for himself on a foundation of knowledge.

“The investigation of the incongruities and failings of mankind,” he said, “can only serve to teach us not to be carried away by controversy, but rather to quietly work out our own laws of action, and conquer the violence of our tempers in the shortest possible time. It is an illusion if men think to make themselves free and happy by finding out the deficiencies and deformities of others and va-

riously remarking thereon. The recognition of virtue and its causes alone makes us satisfied and happy; in that alone can our hearts rejoice. The ambitious man speaks most willingly of the false reputations and base means of others; the avaricious spendthrift, of the misuse of money and the vices of the rich. He who loves truth does not dwell long on lies and obduracy; he combats them to the best of his ability, rejoices in his own acquired knowledge, and admits that those in error also act according to the necessities of their nature."

"Happiness always lies on the other shore," added Oldenburg, "but on the other shore of conquered hate, in the serene peace of knowledge."

Meyer was nevertheless not so easily converted, and with the self-congratulation of having prophesied aright he asked:

"In Olympia you have probably seen the want of character and merely receptive capacity of woman's nature, and will give this variety of humankind its suitable place in your system."

"I know," replied Spinoza, "that he who is crossed in love thinks of nothing but the untrustworthiness, the falsity and all the other oft-repeated defects of women; and all this he as quickly consigns to oblivion when he is again taken into favor by the beloved one. But whoever tries to regulate his sensations and desires only by his love of freedom will endeavor to acquaint himself with their

virtues and the causes thereof as thoroughly as possible, and to fill his mind with the joy which only springs from true knowledge. Whoever observes this diligently—for it is not difficult—and then practises it, will best regulate his actions according to the law of reason.”

Thus the friends raised and animated each other in their penetration of the nature of intellect and investigation of its laws of action, and Spinoza had in his own life proof sufficient of the theory, which he maintained with irrefutable reasoning, that the passions alone disturb the universal well-being and the internal harmony of the individual; but reason reconciles them.

This pleasant, lively intercourse was interrupted by Oldenburg's departure for England. Spinoza, Meyer and de Vries accompanied him to Schreyers-toren (the weeping gate), which takes its name from the tears of the deserted for the departure of their friends. With a heavy heart Spinoza tore himself from his friend's arms, and watched him sadly as the waves bore him away. Meyer and de Vries yet remained to him; but the one was too young to be wholly his friend, their age and experience were too unequal; the other was married. A hundred relations and circumstances make it impossible for a husband and father to devote himself to a friend with the same undivided attention. In Oldenburg he had lost his most faithful friend.



As he returned alone over the Amstel bridge he met a funeral procession. Among the mourners he recognized his former master and fellow-workmen. One of them beckoned him to go with them; he joined the train and learned that they were bearing Peter Blyning to the grave. On the last harvest-home he had been at a dance with his comrades. His companions in jest sent all the girls to him, one after the other, to ask him to dance. He could hardly contain himself for rage and mortification; he poured wine and gin into a glass one after the other and drank them off. Then weeping bitterly he took his crutches and went out. Suddenly a terrific shriek was heard and they all hastened out. Peter having fallen down the steps and fractured his skull, lay there in his last agony.

Spinoza followed the procession much moved. On the way he encountered Chisdai. When he came near him he saw Chisdai spit towards him three times and say the Hebrew words, "But thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it, for it is a cursed thing" (Deut. vii. 26). Spinoza took no notice, and, sunk in his own thoughts, accompanied the corpse of the unhappy man to its last resting-place.

That evening he received another agitating visit. Closely wrapped in his mantle de Silva came to him, and in a stern voice began without other greeting:



“It is not as the Jew that I come to you. He knows you no more. The physician stands before you; his calling is to help all, to advise without question whomsoever it may be. I counsel you, leave your native town; danger menaces you. Your heart is sick as long as you are here. No man can bear to wander among his own people, thrust forth from them like a corpse by those with whom he once lived in fellowship. I know you do not mean to insult those who take your continued stay as an insult. And one thing more. Ephraim Cardoso has joined another party of emigrants for Brazil. Chisdai wished to join them, but they refused him. No one will associate with him, he is avoided like one plague-stricken. No one will forgive him for being your accuser.”

“But I forgive him.”

“That does not help him, nor does it help you. I am afraid he broods over a dreadful deed, for he seldom leaves home in the daytime, but sneaks out at night. Let me warn you; I do it in kindness to you. Ay, I will recall my words, and say I come to you as a Jew. You have not scoffed at our religion before the Sanhedrim, you have spoken as beseemed a thinker. I myself will have naught to do with thought that is not founded on faith; but a Jew appeals to you; be just to us, as to others. You are more pious than you let yourself appear, than your reason permits you to confess.”

“Is faith then the only form of piety?”

“I know, I know,” continued Silva hastily. “I am not come to dispute with you. You may attribute it to pride that I still ascribe piety to you. But when you left the synagogue forever you must have seen beside a seat of prayer, where once your father stood, a child, and that child prayed fervently, and that child was yourself. Forget it not. And you may know and keep it in remembrance that a Jew, with sorrow in his heart, sees you set forth on your lonely way. Farewell!”

Spinoza stretched out his hand to de Silva, but the latter only grasped that of the heretic with a mantle-covered hand, and went quickly away.

This new circumstance deeply agitated Spinoza. It was news from a life that he had lost. He could not be forgotten yet.

Soon, however, news of a death roused sincere sorrow in Spinoza's heart. It was the news that his teacher, Van den Ende, was executed in Paris. The always good-natured physician, who prized laughter as the highest good, had in action shown a devotion to his fatherland that no one would have expected from him. In order to prevent Louis XIV. from levying war on the United Provinces by a popular rising at home, he, with the Duc de Rohan and others, had plotted an insurrection in Normandy. He paid for it with a death on the gallows.

All the inhabitants of Amsterdam, indeed of the United Netherlands, gave a tender, and in some cases, remorseful thought to the departed. Many indeed maintained that the doctor wished to enjoy his greatest good wholesale; he wanted to laugh in chorus with all Europe at Louis XIV. driven hither and thither over the world's stage. But the undertaking of Van den Ende, and his self-sacrificing death, were too grave and impressive not to cut short such an explanation.

Spinoza tried to explain to himself this astonishing turn in his teacher's life. That a lightly living nature might also be a lightly dying one is easily admissible; and even this neck-risking setting of his formerly squandered life on a single cast might be traceable to Van den Ende's character and theories. Still something remained inexplicable. Spinoza had mentally to excuse himself to his teacher; he had not expected so much from him.

He felt obliged to offer Olympia his condolences. In the expression of his grief and recognition of the bold deed must lie his reparation.

He examined himself severely, and felt he could say that only pure participation in the grief of his former love moved him to it; and in the evening he took the once familiar way to Van den Ende's dwelling. The house was silent and deserted, and he learned from a neighbor that Olympia had accompanied her husband to Hamburg.

As he passed the church of St. Olave's on his return, there, where he had once passed the night on the steps, and gazed at Olympia's window, some one rushed at him, seized him by the arm, and stabbing him in the breast with a dagger, ran swiftly away, saying, "The ass hath horns." Spinoza had luckily escaped the stroke. Only his mantle was pierced. He thought he recognized the assassin. It was Chisdai.

When the first involuntary shock and its immediate effects on his mind had passed, Spinoza only reflected that fanaticism is nothing but a return to a primeval law of nature, which is apparently founded on laws of mind and on the sacredness of law. The confused, hot-headed zeal which makes the internal law an external watchword has in all times cursed, crucified, burnt at the stake, and stabbed its enemies. It is worth while to reveal their innate laws to mankind, and lead them to love, and joy, and felicity. . . .

He kept the torn mantle as a reminder to do it.

Can we take this as a metaphor, that hatred and want of judgment only pierce the clothes of the wise, but cannot reach their inner self?

Spinoza did not hear that on the morning after the attempted crime a body was dragged from the Amstel. It was Chisdai's. He was buried unmourned, as a suicide, like Uriel Acosta, whose grave he had insulted.

No news of the Jewish congregation reached Spinoza, and now he was prostrated by sickness.

Thy free thought hath raised thee aloft into the infinite; above isolated appearance thou dost hover in the knowledge of universal laws, then suddenly thou art overthrown in an obscure chamber, dead to the world, the mind shattered, extinguished the streaming light from the law of the universe. No dagger stroke of the hand of man had reached Spinoza's heart, and yet he felt inexpressible pain in his breast, and blood flowed from his mouth.

Was it the result of so many agitating events following one after the other, and that infirmity which had already attacked him in early youth, and recurred on the occasion of his preaching in the synagogue?

Spinoza lay in sore sickness.

Now it was that Ludwig Meyer showed himself the faithful, helpful friend through day and night. And with his own gay humor he told his friend in quiet hours:

"Now you are what you ought to be; indeed, more. You are a banished Jew and a bachelor. A bachelor can return again to that innocence of Paradise before woman was created. He stands alone and free. My original sin—you may laugh away—you will help me by it. Is it not of deep significance that as soon as a second being speaks to Adam he is no longer alone? He no longer acts



merely for himself. He must accommodate his actions to another's. Indeed, in the end he follows another's will. That is the fall; he did not act for himself, but for another. But the bachelor is like Adam in Paradise. You must remain the Adam of the mind."

Spinoza smiled at his friend, and explained that man is not really free in solitude, but only in society. Ludwig Meyer often stood as if in prayer beside the bed of the philosopher, who in painless moments looked upon his illness as a circumstance foreign to his real being. Only once he spoke of the trials he had gone through, and extended an idea he had expressed before:

"The heaviest burden that men can lay upon us is not that they persecute us with their own hatred, ingratitude and scorn; no, it is by planting hatred and scorn in our souls. That is what does not let us breathe freely nor see clearly. It is vanity and self-destruction to hate a man. We must only try to make the wrong action unavailing, and thus again obtain the love of God, in which the world is so peaceful and happy, and which fills us at all times with joy."

He rose ever higher towards that serene height of contemplation, so that he might say of himself:

"I have ever carefully striven with myself neither to despise, nor to blame, nor to detest human actions, but to understand them. And likewise the

human sensations of love, hatred, envy, avarice and pity, and the other motive powers of the soul to regard them not as faults but as qualities of human nature, which belong to it as much as air, heat, cold, storm, thunder and the like are in the nature of the atmosphere, and which, if they are uncongenial, are yet necessary, and have their ascertained causes through which we try to apprehend their nature, and in whose contemplation the mind is as much entertained as in apprehending the things that are agreeable to the imagination."

Meyer could not abstain from plainly telling this investigator of truth his serious situation. For a short time, as if he already felt the sleep of death, Spinoza closed his eyes, while Meyer explained to him that his symptoms were unmistakably those of consumption, and only careful and regular supervision of his life could lengthen his years. Silence reigned for a time, and Meyer watched the unmoved countenance of his friend, who still kept his eyes closed. Then the sick man arose, his eyes shone brightly, no sound of pain, no complaint parted his lips. With the peace of perfected wisdom he decided on the rule of life which he would henceforward follow. And he stood erect while he declared that now, in reflection and self-knowledge alone should his life be ordered, in self-control should his existence be maintained, and in peace of mind it should be fulfilled.

He kept his word.

When full of years to contemplate death, to leave the world of sight and sensation, this is hard, and yet we may comfort ourselves in that we have run through our allotted space. But in the bloom of years, before the midday of life, to feel the seed of death within us, to fight it day by day, to watch each evidence of life, to miss the habitual quiet conviction that life will go on of itself, with careful forethought to keep the duty of existence at all times before our eyes, and thus to rejoice gayly and innocently in the sunny day, to work vigorously, aroused by no appeal from without, to find in his own thoughts the sacredness of life and its joys—that man alone is capable of this to whom freedom and necessity, mortality and eternity, are one, who in wisdom has mounted the highest peak of existence. For wisdom is recognized harmony with nature's laws, the fulfilment of duty, which, in recognition of and obedience to these, becomes inclination.

Such wisdom was Spinoza's.

The world, with its thousand contradictions and inconsistencies in individual manifestations, was in his mind dissolved into harmony. He had thrown off all selfishness, all measurement of things in their influence on individuals; his own life and its trials were lost in the whole. And in enjoyment of the knowledge of divine truth he lived the life eternal.

“He was the free man who can dare to say:

“I forbear from evil, or strive to forbear from it, because it is in direct opposition to my special nature, and would divide me from the love and knowledge of God, which is the highest good.”

In everlasting, unalterable harmony, as the legend says of the gods, and as nature around is unchangeable, lived Benedict Spinoza. What he had attained to by knowledge became to him blissful habit. And as he had once planned life in his thoughts, his thoughts now gave him life.

## EPILOGUE.

ONE night he saw a great vision. A man stood before him who was wonderful and strange to see. His head was covered with a broad hat whose color was as yellow as the grain beneath the sickle, and the hair of his head was white and flowed to his shoulders; on his brow was a sign of blood; his eyes lay hidden in their sockets overgrown with straggling hair. Two furrows reached from them to the corners of his mouth; in them his tears had once streamed, but now they were empty, for the spring was dried up. His white lips were overgrown with hair that reached to his girdle. A hair shirt flapped round his meagre body, and his feet were naked and cut. At his right side hung a pouch, and there also his robe was covered with a patch of the color of his hat. On his heart he carried a small roll in an iron case, fastened to a cord which hung round his neck and made a deep furrow in his flesh. In his right hand he held a staff which reached high above his head.

And the man bent over him, kissed him on the brow, and said:

“Knowest thou me well, O thou my son, in whom I am well pleased! Already more than six



hundred times has the sun fulfilled its course since the day when woe flowed over my head. I stood in my doorway and held my child in my arms. There they brought Jesus, son of Joseph and Mary of Nazareth, who called himself our Messiah. I hated him, for we loved the earth and he showed us the Heavens. We wished for a sword, and he taught us to love the foreign yoke. He was not our Messiah. When he would have rested on the threshold of my house, I spurned him with my foot and thrust him away. But he said, 'Come with me; thy foot which hath spurned me shall find no rest until the day when I return and found my kingdom upon earth.' The child fell from my arms. I followed him. I saw him die the death on the cross. I saw my house, I saw my children no more. They were scattered like chaff before the wind, or were devoured by the sword. Unstable and unsettled as Cain I wandered through forest and field, over stream and mountain. The flowers closed their petals before my eyes, the grass withered if my feet approached it, the birds became mute in the air, and the hungry lion, roaring as he came near, recoiled in fright when he saw me. But the wild animals were merciful and kind compared with those whom I regarded as of my race. I wandered through town and country. They drowned me with wormwood and choked me with gall, they poured poison in my wounds and made my bed on thorns,

and when I would have laid down my head to rest they made the ground tremble beneath me, and when I uplifted my complainings they stopped my mouth with fiery embers. In every place to which I directed my footsteps they seized me by the hair, collected wood in a pile, and thrust me into the flames; but Jehovah, the God of Israel, whose eternal Law I bore in my heart, sent his angel. And though the flames stretched out their devouring tongues towards me, he saved me; and though they shed my blood in streams, he raised me and animated me anew; and though they enveloped me in thick darkness, yet his light was kindled and shone clearly around me; and though they buried me in mouldering graves, his breath blew on me and breathed new life into me. Often I asked him, 'When will it end, O Lord? When wilt thou have mercy on me? When wilt thou hold me in kindness again before thy countenance? When wilt thou pour balm into my wounds? When soften my torments? When wilt thou let me find rest? When wilt thou turn hatred into love, that I may cease to be an abomination, and the mark of scorn unto all nations? Why must I endure eternal-dying without death, an eternal death without life? See, race after race have I seen fade and pass away like the grass of the field; kingdoms have I seen arise and crumble to dust before the breath of thy mouth. Everything rots and is brought forth anew; only I

alone hang like the drops to a pail that tremble in the wind but do not fall. Where the bonds of ice hold the earth everlastingly chained, there I stood; and Arabia's hot sands burned the soles of my feet; and nowhere, nowhere a land where I might sow or reap, or where I might find a grave. Jerusalem the Glorious lies in ruins. When wilt thou rebuild her? When lead us back again? Look down! I say in the morning, Would that it were eve; and in the evening, Would that it were morn. Look down! Trouble is my companion, shame and sorrow are my playfellows. I have won love from them. Give me tears, tears give me, that I may weep my misery. Wilt thou not take then thy hand from off me. Let mine enemies pierce the core of my soul, let me die, let me die. See, I have covered myself with hatred; let me take revenge on mine enemies, and ten times told over their heads what they have done unto me. Speak to the thunder that it may shatter them; command thy lightning that it may devour the marrow of their bones; or give me a sword, a sword give me, that I may bathe myself in their blood. Or will the time come when Love and Faith shall meet, Justice and Peace kiss one another, Truth spring from the earth, Justice look down from Heaven?'

"See, my son, such were my complainings, such was my despair, such my hope! Thou art come to be a Saviour to mankind, me too thou wilt save.

Those who are of thy race have rejected thee, they have attempted thy life; those who are not of thy race have betrayed thee, they have embittered thy sweetest feeling. Thou knowest no anger, thou rewardest them with the truth."

The vision bent again over the sleeper and kissed him. It was a kiss of the dying Ahasuerus, who bore on himself the doom of that Israel which slew Jesus Christ on the Cross.

Spinoza went to Rhynsberg, and from there to Voorburg and the Hague, and wrote the "Theologico-Political Tractate" and the "Ethics." There, alone and deserted, he ended his days. The five books of the "Ethics" came out after his death.

He died on February 21st, 1677, in his forty-fourth year.

No thinker, arisen since Spinoza, has lived so much in the eternal as he did.

THE END.

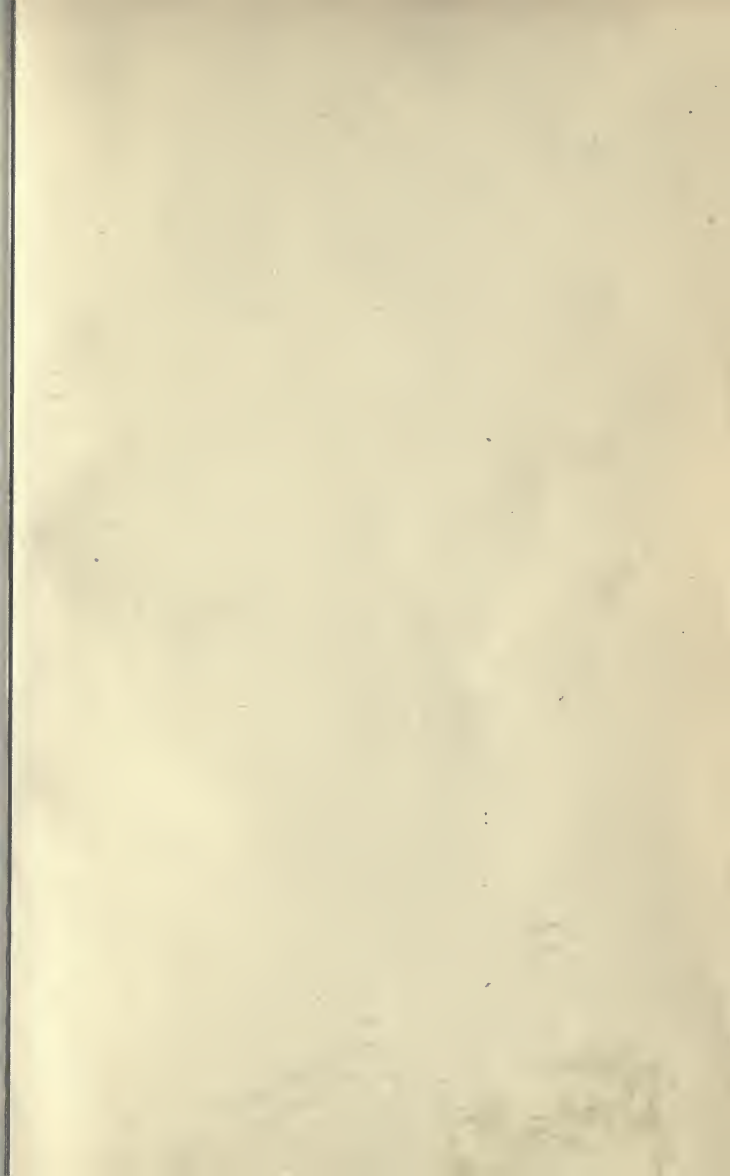


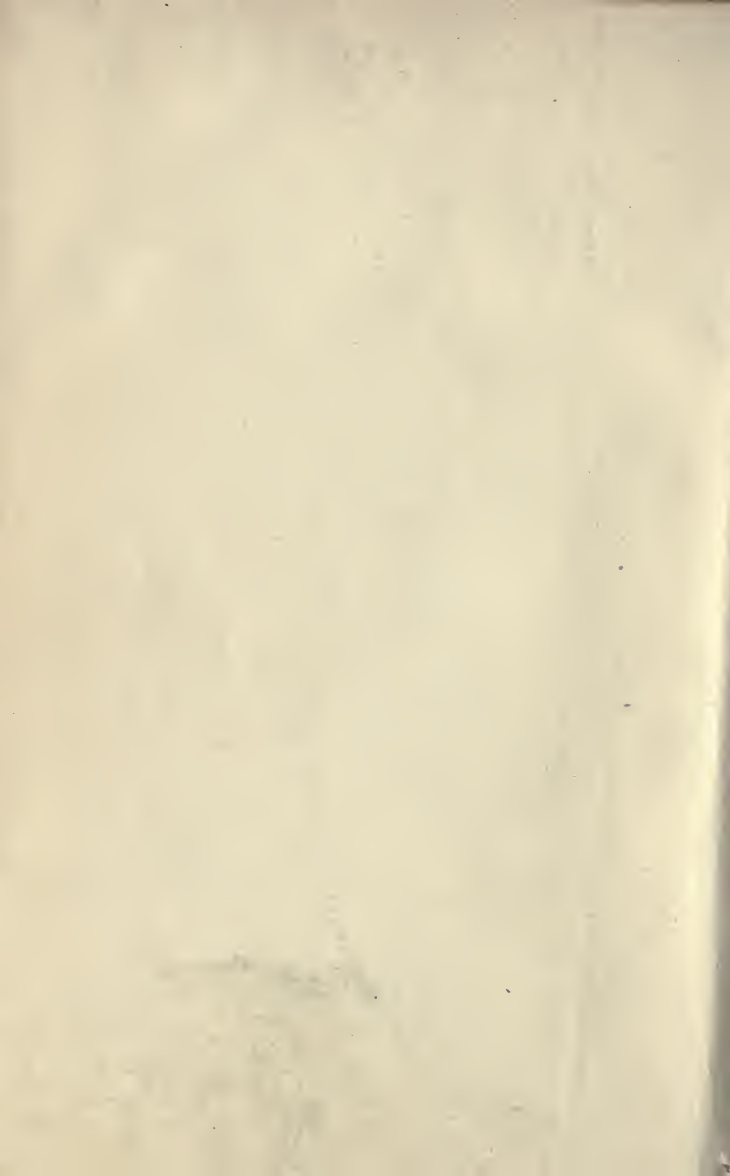
















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